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BOOK REVIEWS

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EDITORIAL

It is being increasingly stressed in our generation that renewed re-examination of the traditional Christian approach to other religions is imperative. In this number of *Religion and Society*, we have devoted considerable space to this general topic. In the course of last year a number of Consultations had been sponsored by the Division of Studies of the World Council of Churches under the title "The Word of God and the Living Faiths of Men". A statement summing up the findings of those various Consultations which was issued by the group of whom many participated in these separate meetings is also printed elsewhere in these pages. That statement in a way reflects the trend of the development of thought following the debate which was initiated at the International Missionary Council meeting held in Tambaram 1938.

The other main articles consist of addresses delivered within the last few months, abbreviated in the interests of space. They bring to bear new light on the subject, dealing as they do individually with Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. We have taken the liberty of including in this connection a major section of Prof. Joseph Sittler's brilliant address at the New Delhi Assembly of the World Council of Churches, for the reason that it is a passionate plea for a new Christology which would give a different turn altogether to the present dialogue. It is apparent that the points of view taken by these writers are different, though not altogether opposed to one another. But we believe that they are representative of the younger generation of Christian scholars who are anxious to forge lasting bonds of vital Christian fellowship with men of faith in other religious traditions without compromising on the basic convictions of their own faith in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

* * * *

In this editorial section we have ventured to reproduce in brief outline the main contribution of three other outstanding Christian thinkers because their approach to the current discussion strikes, in each case, an arresting note of realism and relevance. None of them would claim to have anything like a decisive answer

to what will for long remain a perplexing problem to men of faith in all religions. They have singled out specific issues which call for courageous and careful investigation, especially in view of the changing context of present-day world-life. Christians, especially those who live in the midst of people of long-established heritage of other religions, need to come to grips with these issues.

Dr. Ernst Benz of the University of Marburg is an accepted authority in the field of History of Religions, and we are indebted to a recent article he had contributed to *The Journal of Religion* (University of Chicago Press, XLI, No. 1, 1961) for an exposition of what he calls, "The Theological Meaning of the History of Religions". Prof. Herbert C. Jackson is the new Director of the Missionary Research Library, Union Theological Seminary, New York, and the issues that he has raised are found in a paper on "the Forthcoming Role of the Non-Christian Religious Systems as Contributory to Christian Theology" (*Occasional Bulletin from the Missionary Research Library*, XII, No. 3, 1961). Dr. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, the Director of the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University, Montreal, is a reputed scholar in the field of Islamic history. His article appeared in *The Christian Century* (April 27, 1960) entitled, "Christianity's Third Great Challenge".

* * * *

History and Salvation History

"What does it mean," asks Prof. Benz, "to find that not only do so many other religions exist together with Christianity but that they also energetically make the claim to truth?" Christian theology for long has regarded its attitude to other religions as only a peripheral concern. It is true that the apologists of the second and third century, especially Clement of Alexandria and Origen, developed the concept of the *logos spermaticos* "who had worked throughout the whole pre-Christian history of mankind preparing, even the non-Christians, for the coming manifestation of the divine Logos in his fulness and perfectness of human shape in the person of Jesus Christ." But no further elaboration of this concept had been attempted since then. On the other hand, a merely negative understanding of non-Christian religions had become characteristic of the traditional Christian view. Benz maintains that this view "was definitely fixed as a result of using

the encounter with Islam as the model or prototype of other religious encounters". It was this "crusade method" which determined the Portugese attitude in colonies under their direct control on Asian soil. For example, in Goa all Hindu and Buddhist temples were completely demolished so that no archæological monuments are found there of the ancient cults. It is stated that when Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg, the early Protestant missionary pioneer in India at the beginning of the 18th century, made a study of the beliefs and practices of the Hindus of his time in South India and sent it to his theological teacher at Halle for publication, he was severely repremanded not to "waste his time with studying pagan nonsense".

During the time of the Enlightenment, however, the German idealists ventured to suggest that all religion is truth from God, but that Christianity as "the crowning of a historical developmental process was absolute". Later Christian thought does not seem to have made any further progress in this matter of relating the history of religions to the history of salvation. Benz maintains that "the historical development of the religious consciousness cannot be excluded from the soteriological view of history" meaning thereby the Biblical understanding of *heilsgeschichte*, which posited creation only between six to four millennia before Christ, and is closely tied up with the history of the Hebrew people.

In the first place, our knowledge of prehistory and early history of mankind has been deepened by such studies in anthropology and prehistory as that of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. So much so that we are at the threshold of a revolution in our whole concept of man and history. The second problem is connected with the relation between history of religions and soteriology after Christ, *post Christum*. Benz urges that here also we have to develop new concepts, "the traditional Logos theology being unfit and unpracticable with respect to our modern knowledge of history of religions and to the present situation of the Christian Church". We are discovering that the history of religions is a living movement which is not confined to set patterns but is always overleaping the framework of its established historical forms, finding creative expressions in worship and new social attitudes. Moreover we are becoming powerfully aware in our day of the mutual influence and penetration of living religions. The strange pheno-

mena of the break out of new religions in modern Japan, for instance, cannot be breezily dismissed as "syncretism".

Modern Christian theology should not persist in ignoring the fact that history of religions continues after Christ and in addition to the history of the Christian Church. The history of salvation is realized not only in the confines of the organized Churches but also in the total scope of the history of religions. Therefore, Benz pleads that we should begin to study what it means for a Christian and for a Christian concept of soteriology that the history of the Christian Church goes on in the midst of and together with a general development of history of religions. "A true Christian concept of soteriology should no longer ignore the changing understanding of history of religions both before and after Christ and should bring history of mankind, soteriology, and history of religions into an inner theological relation."

* * * *

Need for a Radical Mutation in Theology

Early in its dogmatic history, Jackson contends, Christian theology came to be formulated in thought-forms of Greek philosophy. This has continued so even until today. Christian faith is understood and transmitted in categories of thought and expression which are essentially Greek. The characteristic principle of the Graeco-Roman civilization is that of "unity in variety". The emphasis on variety stems from the Greek stress on the cultivation of the individual, and that on unity from the concern for the integration of human personality and the Roman genius to weld together heterogeneous races and peoples into the one single Empire. Moreover, Greek intellectual structuring is marked by emphasis on logic and rationality. The universe, according to the Greeks, was sustained by the *logos*, and thought and its communication was made possible only because of it. Since it was argued that the *logos* was identical with Christ, it was also assumed that wherever the *logos* was at work, Christ was at work too. What is overlooked in all this is the fact that the *logos* concept was itself of local Hellenic origin, and unknown to this day to equally valid mind-structuring in other civilizations.

Prof. Jackson is convinced that there is a fundamental difference between the Oriental and Occidental mind-structuring.

"In the Oriental *Weltanschauung* the underlying functional principle is juxtaposition and identity in contrast to the Greek principle of unity in variety". The principle of juxtaposition readily accepts "paradox" in religion without removing "the tension of the encounter with God and thus preserves the need and demand for decision, a kind of decision which is related to the will and not the intellect....a primary factor in the 'salvation' that Christianity offers." The principle of juxtaposition does not regard opposites as irreconcilables but as polarities, not as "black-*versus*-white" but as "black-and-white". The Oriental way, further, lays stress on Being, rather than on "knowing". Logic and reason are regarded only instrumental to the central concern of being as such, the relation of man's being to the Ultimate Being. This is illustrated in Buddha's alleged unconcern about theoretical knowledge, knowledge not related to the existential question of man's salvation.

An ecumenical theology, Dr. Jackson contends, which is the need of our times cannot be restricted, much less subject, to any one pattern of mind-structuring. Therefore, if Christianity "hopes to 'stand' with the resurgent non-Christian religions, it must ecumenize its theology by drawing from the whole world and creating something entirely new, a system of apprehension that will be intellectually respectable and appealing to upper classes of people and which can provide the foundations for new cultures that will evolve out of the contemporary world chaos". Christian thought in this generation is consequently urged to consider the "forthcoming role of the non-Christian religious systems as contributory to Christian theology".

This "radical mutation" in Christian theology is necessary. Jackson is realistic enough to admit that such a venture will have to be made "without benefit of ecclesiastical support". We are in fact at the threshold of what might be designated as another "Age of Heretics", and this creative theological advance is inevitable. And Jackson rests secure in the assurance that "so long as there is real fidelity to the Scriptures, there need be no fears about what will be the permanent outcome".

* * * *

Pluralistic Mankind and Christian Faith

"Man's life today is cast in a multicultural context. We live in a pluralistic world. The religious man too lives in a world of

many traditions, of variegated spiritual life". This demands, Dr. Cantwell Smith urges, a new orientation about our way of thinking about men of other religions—a way at once more humble and open than the usual traditional Western way of superiority and arrogance. We live in a world today in which no one community can rest secure and complacent in the assumption of its being in the majority, for in comparison with the communities of the world, we are all, each one of us, members of a minority.

The way to live in this situation is not by abandoning our convictions, but by living them in such a way that they undergird understanding and neighbourliness. "We must learn, in our new situation, what has always been our primary task: to love both God and our neighbour." Only then can we hope to be effective witnesses to the truth that we hold. Our dedication to our faith is no substitute to a real genuine understanding of our neighbour. Our evangelistic efforts come to nothing if we do not communicate with our neighbour in a meaningful way. Not only this, but religious misunderstanding does often result in disasters, as it happened in India after the partition, when religious differences between Muslims, on the one hand, and Hindus and Sikhs on the other, resulted in one of the most terrible holocausts in recent history.

The Church has consistently proclaimed that the non-Christians are going to hell. As Cantwell Smith points out, "Not many modern Christians really believe this any more, but no clear alternative has been formulated by the Church. In other words, the Christian community is at the moment theologically unequipped for living in the 20th century, with its pluralistic mankind." The great challenge of the day for Christian theology is to fashion an alternative theology to the traditional one which will do justice to the existential situation of our day, a situation in which men of different religious traditions have come together as never before. In its history, Christianity has met several challenges and has emerged enriched in consequence. There was the challenge of Greek philosophy early in Christian history; there was again in the 19th century the challenge of modern science. Out of both these encounters, it may be claimed that Christianity came forth the stronger. The great challenge of this day is the fashioning of new human attitudes and fresh theological orientation with regard to men of other faiths and their religions. It is no doubt

a fateful challenge but it is also replete with possibilities of "rich rewards in human co-operation and fellowship that will flow from a solution".

Two suggestions are offered by Dr. Smith as a contribution to meeting the contemporary challenge of the relation of Christian faith to other religions. First, he pleads, let us drop altogether the use of the descriptive term, "non-Christian". There are Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and so on, but there are no non-Christians as such. God undoubtedly has a more positive way of looking on his children, than as "non-Christians". Second, let us "abandon as utterly unworthy the traditional notion that if Christianity is true, then it must follow that other faiths are false or, at least, inadequate". This is neither good logic, nor is it commensurate with the Christian way of understanding either God or man. Logically, the truth of our faith does not falsify other religions. "This is not to hold that all religions are essentially the same, which seems glib and obviously untrue. It is rather to hold that God loves all men equally, reaches out after them wherever they may be, and loves them within whatever situation he may find them. If *this* is not true, then the Christian faith is false."

* * * *

In the Context of a Multi-religious Society

What is being impressed most emphatically upon our generation is the indubitable fact of many religions as a persistent reality in human history. An earlier generation of Christians was inclined to rest with the conclusion that mankind is naturally constituted to be religious. What was striking about it all was the *universality* of religion, not the *multiplicity* of the phenomena. Besides, the rapid advance of Western domination over Asia and Africa, and with it the missionary expansion of Christianity in the lands which had been brought under the rule of European powers, had unconsciously fostered the belief that eventually Christianity will in some sense prevail over every other religion. There is a great deal of truth in Benz' contention that this Christian attitude to other religions was very largely conditioned by the "crusade outlook" which resulted from the Christian encounter with Islam.

The world situation today is vastly different from what was true of the colonial era of the last century. Christianity is now

accepted as but one of many religions, and in almost every country in the world there exists not one but many religions. This is increasingly true also of Europe and America which had been regarded as Christian lands for centuries past. Actually we are only at the threshold of a new era when the spread of other religions into the lands of the Christian West has only begun. It may be true, as it is repeatedly being told us, that we are moving towards a common world culture based on science and technology, and that we are being drawn together as a large world community. But it is no less true that we are bound by national loyalties first, and that world community we visualize is an international community. The basic consideration is therefore the building up of national coherence and unity as a precondition of world community. Thus the multi-religious character of society within each nation group and the present need to reckon with this fact have powerfully influenced all serious plans for nation-building, especially in Asian lands.

One consequence is the rapid development of the concept of secular society, that is a society which takes account of all religions but is committed to no one particular religion. Another is the no less noticeable trend to accept the majority religion of the country as the religion of the state and to accord a 'minority status' to all other religions. In either case, the nation-state has recognized the multi-religious nature of society, and it is in this setting that the question of the relation of Christianity to other religions has come to the fore, in a sense that it never before had to be faced in Christian history.

* * * *

The Missionary Character of the Christian Faith

In the context of a multi-religious society to what do Christians draw pointed attention in the content of their faith, and why? As Bishop Lesslie Newbigin has pointed out in his recent book *A Faith for this One World?* (SCM Press, London, 1961), this question is not only asked by men of other faiths in other lands, it is asked by Christians in the Churches of the West. "And Christian missions themselves," he admits, "have constantly been guilty of giving the wrong answer. A study of the history of the promotional literature of Christian missions would produce some strange results. They have been advocated as providing the crown

of Western culture, as a sort of spiritual cement for the British empire, as the religious counterpart of the democratic way of life, and as an antidote to world communism." This implies that serious thinking is needed to explicate the contents of the Christian faith which is rightly centred in such affirmations as that "Christianity is Christ" (*cf.* Stephen Neill, *Christian Faith and Other Faiths*, Oxford University Press, 1961, p. 9) and that it is "the total fact of Jesus the Christ" to which we witness (Newbigin, p. 57). "There are three elements in the faith which Jesus accepted from Israel," explains Newbigin, "in which his own deeds and words were rooted, and without which they cannot be understood. *First* is the faith that the God in whose name Jesus is come is the Creator of all things, the sovereign Lord of time with power to bring one age to an end and to declare the coming of a new one. *Second* is the faith that mankind created in God's image, is fallen from his true estate and involved in a common sin against the creator. *Third* is the faith that what God is doing in Christ is the culmination of a plan which begins with the choosing of a people to be his own people, to be his witnesses and the agents of his purpose for the world."

There is no doubt that the redemptive movement of God in Christ is not to be hindered or limited by the Christian interpretation of it. Narrow categories of traditional thought-forms in which it has been expressed in past Christian history will have to be augmented by more extensive use of other categories characteristic of the mind-structuring of other people than those who have been brought up in the Graeco-Roman tradition; but the fact would still remain that the Christian responsibility would always be that of announcing the Good News of God in Christ. "If the Christian has really trusted in Christ, he can open himself without any fear to any wind that blows from any quarter of the heavens. If by chance some of those winds should blow to him unexpected treasures, he will be convinced that Christ's store houses are wide enough to gather in those treasures too, in order that in the last day nothing may be lost."

HINDUISM AND CHRISTIANITY

By Fr. Raymond Panikkar

One of the most encouraging phenomena of our times is a world-wide and sincere desire for mutual understanding and a real thirst for universality. Hardly any individual or group whether nation, race, culture, confession or religion, wants to be shut off from its fellows and remain locked in by particularisms, nationalisms, isolationism, or by any such kind of "ism" which is suffering from a lack of universality.

The ecumenical movement among Christians is one fair example, and among the most important, of this general trend towards universality. Christians are becoming more and more aware of the untenability of their divisions, and try sincerely to overcome them. Christian ecumenism seeks a truly middle path which allows of a dialogue and encounter between the Christian confessions, neither presupposing solutions to the issues nor compelling disloyalty to concrete personal faith, in trying to reach a deeper and more real Christian unity.

We would like to widen and to deepen that Christian ecumenism into an ecumenic ecumenism, if this expression is permissible; that is to say, into an ecumenism really ecumenical, catholic, engaged not only in a dialogue and encounter between Christian Confessions, but also between Religions. Such catholic ecumenism would help clarify to a great extent the issues at stake in Christian ecumenism. This essay is intended to be a contribution towards such a catholic ecumenism. It is not a complete treatise on the subject. We would like to deal with the particular problem of the relationship between Hinduism and Christianity. And this only in a general way, *i.e.*, according to the principle of their relationship without entering into concrete problems. We presuppose a previous knowledge of what both Hinduism and Christianity are from both ancient and modern points of view. Our terms

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* Father Panikkar, well known to our readers, was until recently doing research in Banaras University. Now he is resident at the International University, Rome. This article is a summary of the paper that was presented on his behalf to the WSCF Asian Leaders Study Conference in Bangalore during Christmas, 1961.

of reference are to explore the *and* that relates Hinduism and Christianity.

The Christian Standpoint

We should like first to express this relationship in purely Christian terms before attempting any kind of interpretation; Christ is the universal Redeemer. There is no redemption apart from Him. Where there is no redemption there is no salvation. Therefore, any human person that is saved—and we know by reason and by faith that God provides everybody with the necessary means of salvation—is saved by Christ, the only Redeemer. This amounts to saying that Christ is present in one form or another in every human being on his religious way to God.

On the other hand, Christianity is not just the action of Christ in the world; it is the concrete religion established by Christ to be the normal and ordinary place of His redeeming power and saving action. How does Hinduism fit into it? There are only two possible kinds of answers: Either we exclude from Hinduism any possible action of Christ altogether, *i.e.*, Christ would save good Hindus in spite of and against their Hinduism; or, we somehow incorporate Hinduism into the universal economy of salvation by God through Christ, of which Christianity is the summit. The second alternative does not deny, of course, that salvation is always a personal affair, nor, on the other hand, does it imply that the whole of Hinduism as a positive religion has saving power. However, the question remains whether Hinduism as such has any place in the Christian economy of salvation.

We are inclined to opt for this second answer, and our thesis makes an attempt to formulate just one aspect of this "somehow" (*i.e.*, the incorporation of Hinduism into Christianity) by means of the conjunction *and*, because it is not impossible that the expression "Hinduism and Christianity" has no sensible meaning. The problem may be stated thus: Is there really any *and* that copulates both? And if it exists, what is the sense of that copula?

The Thesis Stated

Our first remark will be that the relationship under study is a relation *sui generis*, a peculiar one, which cannot be included in any other. We hold, therefore, that the relation belongs rather to a certain type, which may be expressed with the help of the

analogy of a certain group of pairs and not with that of the other group; but we do not affirm that our relation can be exhaustively classified under one of the mentioned examples.

The relationship between Hinduism and Christianity finds in the copulating conjunction *and* a somewhat adequate expression, but this *and* does not express a relationship of the kind such as 'Falsehood-Truth', 'Darkness-Light', 'Sin-Sanctity', 'Damnation-Salvation' and similar pairs; but rather of the kind: 'Potency-Act', 'Seed-Fruit', 'Forerunner-Real Presence', 'Symbol-Reality', 'Desire-Accomplishment', 'Allegory-Thing-in-itself', and so on. In all these pairs, as we shall later explain, there is a certain relationship belonging to the Christian dynamism of Death and Resurrection.

We could have also mentioned the fundamental pair "natural-supernatural", but we have abstained from including it in our thesis for three main reasons. First, because the conception of natural religion, retaining too many reminiscences of the naturalism of the past centuries, would seem to exclude the work of grace and of Christ inside the other religions, putting them altogether outside Christian Providence and levelling them down to mere products of the human mind.

Indeed, Christianity is supernatural in a very specific sense, but Hinduism can hardly be called a "natural" religion in the sense of being just a product of "nature". Even if we were to say that Hinduism was the creation of the human mind, still it would be a mind enlightened by God and in fact not a "natural" human mind. It is a "fallen" mind which, like every existing mind, is already suffering the call of Christ, for He died for the whole of mankind. It may be fallen or redeemed, but it is not "natural". Or, to be more precise, it is not simply "fallen", because the Mystery of the Cross has a universal efficiency, and yet it is not merely "redeemed" or supernatural either for the effects of Redemption have not yet been fully accepted or acknowledged. This is what we would like to call the "existential status". Let us also not forget that we are dealing now with the human spirit facing the ultimate religious problems and not just with a technical or mathematical question where the "natural" human mind may have its proper autonomy.

Secondly, this pair of concepts lies in another sphere and thus they can hardly be used to express the tension we are about to explain. On the one hand, they seem to express too much; from the natural to the supernatural there is neither bridge, nor right of passage, nor any claim whatever. Moreover, to call a religion a natural religion amounts to saying that it is not religion at all. Religion deals with the salvation of man and salvation as union with God, divinisation of our being, belongs by definition to the supernatural sphere. Now a mere natural religion—accepting always that distinction—would be an impotent religion to fulfil what it stands for, namely, the salvation of man, or in other words, it would only be a would-be religion. For salvation is precisely the transit from the natural to the supernatural. Conversion means transformation, and not simply a moral change. It means a radical mutation from natural man to the supernatural, divinised person. On the other hand, it may express too little, for "nature" is neither bad, nor false, nor sinful.

Thirdly, we do not include the tension between the natural and the supernatural in our thesis, because the proper place for this fundamental distinction, which should on no account be minimized, lies on the one hand in the two different forms of knowledge and, on the other hand, in the personal sphere of a personal participation and communion with God. When a Hindu is saved, for instance, he is saved by the grace of Christ and is incorporated into the supernatural order, and yet he may know nothing about Christianity. Or, in other words, the dichotomy, natural-supernatural, is not strictly applicable to Hinduism and Christianity, because its proper place is the inner personal core of a human being who is in the course of conversion from his merely "created" structures to the living God calling him to share His own life.

Why Reject the 'Falsehood-Truth' Thesis

We adduce three groups of reasons to discard the thesis that the type of relationship between Hinduism and Christianity is analogous to what is expressed in 'Falsehood-Truth', etc. The first group of reasons refer to the difficulties that would arise from a psychological and also pastoral point of view. We do not adduce these reasons because they prove that the approach would then be methodologically wrong but because such a thesis would contradict both the Christian 'spirit' and religious honesty. The

second argument is based on the historical proof which does not provide any evidence for the thesis. The third point is based on the theological nature of Christianity itself which does not seem to be consistent with the assumptions implied in the thesis.

Psychological and Pastoral Inadequacy

Whoever maintains such an approach will automatically shut in on himself the doors of communication and of understanding. Nothing is so dangerous in the Christian apostolate as the paternalistic attitude and the false and wrong security of one who thinks himself to be in full possession of the truth. The true Christian does not possess anything; not even the truth. He is rather possessed by it, as Thomas Aquinas points out. He knows God because he is known by Him. The Christian himself is a pilgrim and has to seek out his way, of love certainly, but he goes in trembling and fear checking humbly his beliefs and his acts so that he may not be cast away, even while preaching true doctrine to others, as Saint Paul himself feared.

The Christian way is one of friendship, according to the example and the explicit teaching of Christ himself, and friendship presupposes mutual communication and confidence and a certain equality. Where this does not exist no communication is possible, and without it, there is no *kerygma*, no proclamation of the Word, no transmitting of faith. And where communication does not arise, communion is not possible.

That is to say, the Christian, while believing in the newness and historical absoluteness of Christianity, believes that Christ is the carrier of God's ultimate (eschatological) revelation to men on earth. But revelation means the unveiling of reality, letting us discover the true face of God and the authentic sense of human life. This revealing does not mean that full Christianity is already there, or that we should ignore the newness and new creation of Christ in men, levelling down the distinction between the natural and the supernatural. But it does mean that this process is one of redemption and restoration of the superoriginal (supernatural) order broken by original Sin. The Christian instinctively falls in love with the positive aspects of other religions—when he is not prejudiced—because he believes he discovers there the footprints of God's redemption, and some veiled and perhaps disfigured grace which he believes he must unveil and reform,

out of love for his neighbour and sense of responsibility for the faith God has given him.

Historical Experience

To begin with, even the most elementary history seems to prove beyond any trace of doubt that the history of Christian nations has not always been a model of righteousness and virtue, nor has the relationship between Christians and non-Christians throughout its history been a charitable and merciful embrace. If it had been so, the difference between the history of Christian peoples and that of non-Christian cultures would have been so obvious and striking that no diasgreement could possibly arise on this point. But the fact is that history cannot offer itself as witness.

The spiritual history of Hinduism is full of parallel instances to that of Christ finding in that non-Jewish woman, or in that Roman officer, more faith than in the House of Israel. That is to say, the spiritual history of Hinduism of the past as well as of the present tells us of true virtue, of real sanctity, of authentic mysticism, and I would dare even to say, of undeniable miracles and true charity. If some Christian from the Occident should read these lines with a touch of scepticism I would like to invite him to consider for himself the life of other religions. "Where do you dwell, Lord? Come and see!" Only then we can tackle the theological problem of grace and mysticism outside Christianity and in Christianity itself. The idea of Christ at work in history is not alien to Christianity.

Finally, an ontological study of history from a theological point of view proves again that Divine Providence has been looking after all his children and that here is a Christian economy in history in which Hinduism cannot be fully rejected, but in which it would find its providential place. What other means of salvation has God—Christ—provided to the people of India down the ages, even before the appearance of historical Christianity, if not Hinduism? And even now in spite of twenty centuries of Christian history, can we honestly affirm that Hinduism as a whole has really met Christianity and its challenge? Indeed, the ultimate core of salvation takes place in the unutterable depths of the human person, but the normal divine preparation for this ultimate step goes through the more tangible channels of the

established religions, even if they cannot provide the perfect means of salvation.

Theological Reflection

If He has created men for union with Him, He has surely provided them with the means whereby to attain this end. If these means were exclusively in the visible Church, or in "official" Christianity, other people could not be saved. If it is true that outside the Church there is no salvation, this "Church" should not be confounded with its outer appearance, not even with an explicit adherence to Christianity. The ultimate reason for this universal idea of Christianity, an idea which makes possible the Catholic embrace of every people and religion, lies in the Christian conception of Christ not only as the historical Redeemer, but also as the unique Son of God, as the Second Person of the Trinity, as the only one ontological—temporal and eternal—link between God and the world.

Two propositions are universally accepted by Christian theology: (1) Salvation comes exclusively through Christ. (2) God does not condemn anybody. Now, this second proposition amounts to saying that God provides to every man coming into human existence the means for his salvation. The theological problem that our question raises concerns the means that God provides for the non-Christian, or for the Hindu in our particular case. Undoubtedly, salvation being a supernatural act (for it is the union with God, or the full incorporation into Christ—in Christian terms), it is always a gratuitous divine act and there are no proportionate means here on earth in order to attain the participation in the divine life. Yet the normal procedure of divine providence in dealing with the whole creation without excluding mankind is not an anarchical intervention and a lawless, unexpected, or even whimsical interference, but follows a natural and supernatural pattern which crystallises in what we call the physical and the historical order.

Further, because the human person is not just an individual, but has also a sociological and a historical dimension, salvation though an inner and personal act of Christ, is prepared and is normally carried out by external and visible means which we call sacraments. The good and *bona fide* Hindu is saved by Christ and not by Hinduism, but it is through the sacraments of Hinduism, through the message of morality and good life, through *das*

Mysterion that comes down to him through Hinduism, that Christ saves the Hindu normally. This amounts to saying that Hinduism has also a place in the universal saving Providence of God.

Moreover, the fact that Christ speaks to the whole man means that he does not speak to an abstract and common nature, but to persons whose very being is intermingled and inseparable from their beliefs, customs, ways of thinking, feeling, etc. Man is constitutively an historical and a social being and Christ does not overlook this human dimension—as he Himself in his time walked and spoke as a Jew.

This may be a pure historical evolution of mankind, but the fact still remains that if God had to look after the salvation of the Hindu folk, a purely personal-individual action would have had very little meaning; it had to be something collective, sociological, and this again is the Christian place of Hinduism in the economy of salvation.

The Encounter of Two Different Faiths

It will not be out of place perhaps to recall again that because we are dealing with the meeting of religions, the encounter is not merely rational, but it is an encounter of two different faiths, though there may be, and there is, a fundamental difference between the two faiths. Hence it is in the depths of the dark and yet more sure knowledge where both spiritualities can meet. In that level understanding is not a rational one, *i.e.*, it is not the conclusion of any syllogism. We have no "reasons" whatever to "prove" our statements. We can only try to formulate the consequences of Christian faith in an external intelligible manner, so that the way is open for the enlightenment of a higher evidence.

To begin with, we may say that the nature of that *and* denotes a very peculiar dynamism and direction. That is to say, the relationship is between Hinduism *and* Christianity, but not *vice-versa*. Hinduism has a certain priority; Hinduism comes first, but that *and* leads it towards Christianity; our *and* expresses the dynamism of a transit, of a 'pascha', of a 'pass-over', a conversion (in the right sense of the word) from Hinduism to Christianity. Hinduism is the starting-point of a religion that cu minates. This culmination, however, is not just a continuation or a mere natural prolongation, but implies the peculiar dialectic of our *and* in the sense we are trying to develop.

If God has a universal Providence over the whole of mankind and Christianity is the fulness of His revelation "in these last times", there must also be a link between the cosmic religions and the religion of His Son. Hinduism because it is a kind of Christianity in potency, because it has already a Christian seed, because it is the desire of fulness and the fulness is Christ, is already pointing towards it, already contains, indeed, the symbolism of the Christian reality.

There is a link between Hinduism and Christianity and we have tried to describe it as clearly as we could. And yet we could equally have said, in another higher place, that there is no link, not because Hinduism appears to be wrong and Christianity true, but because.... (and again we have to introduce the subject of the sentence coming down to the realm of concepts, though we use them now only metaphorically) because Christianity is foolishness, because Christianity is provisional and not self-sufficient—being only for this temporal existence and relying absolutely on Christ—because there is no link from below, but only from above, but in such a way that the real transcendent call appears as an immanent urge.

In other words—though we should put on this level all words aside—the nature of our *and* is a mystery in the full and precise sense of the word. We do not know the plans of God, nor can we decipher the mystery of history. We discover a dynamism, we have tried to describe a relationship, but neither the dynamism nor the relationship should be interpreted as just something natural, or as an oversimplified, exclusively supernatural relation as if the only destiny of Hinduism were to become Christianity. Our *and* represents certainly a tension, and we have clearly stated the meaning and direction of such a polarity, but yet at the ultimate level at which it is given to us to surmise the divine Will, we are bound to recognise that this *and* should not be interpreted in a mere sense of integration, assimilation or conversion, but in a higher instance which does not deny the previous one, but which gives to all our thoughts a lower, humbler, meaning and yet a higher music. But the musical score was lost in Paradise and at present we can but stumble through our single melodies in the hope that once we may hear the full symphony.

THE ENCOUNTER OF CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

By Canon Kenneth Cragg*

The world of Islam is in tremendous flux in our generation. It has come into a large measure of political self-responsibility. It is under the steady, inexorable pressure of contemporary technology. It is also confronting more or less seriously the alternatives of communist philosophy. All these factors are new, or relatively new, in its long career. There is no need to discuss in detail these contemporary changes. Rather our concern is to define and illustrate, as far as possible, the nature and content of the Christian relation to Islam in this actual world of our time.

Each party in the encounter must define for itself what the encounter means. What a veritable Muslim encounter with the faith of the cross might mean within Islam today is for Muslims to say, and some of them, it would seem, are beginning to say it. All that we can do is to try to set the pattern of a Christian relationship to our fellow-men in Islam. The Christian bearings of the Church towards the mosque have to be defined and pursued quite irrespective of the Muslim's response, because only in this faith will the response come. If we want to deserve to be understood, we must be willing and patient to understand. "With what measure ye meet, it shall be measured to you." It is not for the Christian to define what Islam ought to do about the Christian faith. But by what he, the Christian, does in relation to Islam he will necessarily shape, and to that extent evoke from outside, the sort of reactions that are made by Islam.

The "Islamic" Validity in being Christian

In order to move further into an attempt to define Christian relationships to Islam, consider what might venturously be called the "Islamic" validity in being Christian. This is a deliberately provocative way of putting it. If we are to take Islam seriously, we must be acutely aware of the variety of meanings that belong

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to it. From this point of view, Islam is unique among the faiths of the world. Its name is not about somebody who is followed but about something that is done. The Arabic language has no capital letters, and the word Islam, which would normally be spelled with a capital 'I', could quite rightly be spelled with a small 'i'. Islam is a term describing something which men *do*, and not merely a creed or a system to which they belong. If you want to distinguish this further, then think of it in your minds either in italics or in inverted commas. Ideally, Islam with a capital 'I', as a recognizable cultural system with a long history, is the same thing as *islam*. But unless we keep this distinction clear, we shall miss many great areas of potential relationship.

Now this *islam* is the concept of the recognized Lordship of God. If you want a definition of it, it could be found in the phrase, "Let God *be* God". Or, to use a phrase in the New Testament, "That God may be all in all". The remarkable corollary is that men have it in their power to frustrate the very Godness of God. Islam is letting God be God. Of course, there are certain real and fundamental senses in which you cannot prevent God's being God. "The Lord reigneth, be the earth never so unquiet." But there are other very real senses in which God has willed his sovereignty to be within the capacity of human recognition, and the obligation to bring this responsive recognition of the divine right, not of man but of God, over all life is the fundamental and ultimate sense of the meaning of *islam*.

It is easy, but not finally relevant, to observe that there are multitudes of Muslims who have never understood it that way. In interreligious relationships you must never take your cue from what is intelligible to the lowest popular superstitious expression of the faith in question. One would hardly look for a satisfactory definition of Christian faith in certain areas of its popular practice in the Middle Ages or even since. Of course, we do not neglect the discrepancy between what ought to be and what is, but for purposes of understanding the meaning of the faith, we do not go to its most ignorant and compromised expression, to its caricature, even if it is a self-caricature. We must go to its central intention, always, of course, as realists and never, therefore, for the same reason as cynics.

The most obvious and immediate historic fulfilment of Islam in the sense, "Let God be God", is the cleansing of Mecca of

all its idols after the prophet's conquest of the city. Being Christian has tremendous "Islamic" validity in this sense. If only we were not so dull and dead, we would see in the New Testament faith the most tremendous anti-idolatry that this world has ever known. There ought to be enough in the New Testament confrontation of the Church with idols to thrill the soul of any Muslim who believes that God must reign. "You turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God" (I Thessalonians I: 9). You have the magnificent Christian repudiation of the right of the emperor to be worshipped. The right to be obeyed, yes! Christianity in the first three centuries, unlike Islam, did not propose the disturbance of any imperial order. It lived within ore, but in a sublime intolerance of its defiance of the sovereignty of God, expressed in the demand of the emperor to be worshipped. When you try to enter as a Christian into the Muslim concept of *shirk*, the supreme and fundamental evil of worship being directed to other than God, you begin to realize that to be Christian is, in that sense, to be where Islam says humanity should be.

So it is also in the Muslim insistence on the unity of God, but not understood in purely metaphysical terms. So much of our Christian Christology is purely metaphysical. It has to do with abstruse questions of status, that is, how in Christ is the union of God and man? These profound questions of metaphysics or of Christological theology have their place. But ultimately the divine Lordship in Christ has to do with action, with God's reign, with the sovereignty that demands to be realized over against all false absolutes. The idolatries of modern man are the false absolutes of state or party or race or profit or business or self. Letting God *be* God is the most tremendous reality over against these occasions of the violation of his right. We must see what God in Christ is in this setting of the redemptive will to reign. Is not "Christ crucified the *power* of God"? Sovereignty as the central meaning of Islam has a contrasted and yet an equal emphasis in the New Testament and can take its place in the "Islamic" validity in being Christian. We begin thus to open doors of relationship that break away from the vexed situation of communal antipathy that is traditional and stereotyped.

There is, for example, in the Quran the concept of *shukr*, which in Arabic means "gratitude". You find the Quran

frequently, in a kind of amazed tone, reproaching the ingratitude of men. Gratitude is sometimes used as the antithesis of *kufr* or unbelief. The *kafir* is the infidel, and usually this means "the other fellow", not of our faith. Yet, the real atheist is not the man who credally denies God's existence: he is the man who is content to behave as if God did not exist, the man who never gives thanks. Is there not here another great opportunity of breaking into new thought: gratitude as the appropriate human relationship to the divine, and unbelief as something more than merely credal, as an inward willingness to ignore God, the sort of willingness which can very well co-exist with the most appropriate orthodoxy. After all, can you find a better description of Christianity than as that religion which is most supremely involved in gratitude? "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift." Nobody has greater need for gratitude than the Christian, because nobody believes such tremendous things about the self-giving of God to which this gratitude is the response.

In the Quran the realm of nature is seen as a realm of divine signs, the *ayat* in which God is intimating his goodness, writing tokens of his presence, in phenomena of the sentient world, not least in the phenomenon of sex and its mystery, in his acts of trust in man which call for reverent recognition. Nature's signs are perceptible only to the grateful, thoughtful person. The benediction of heaven's bounty is never recognized by the casual. "He that hath ears, let him hear." With some imagination, and with a dedicated mind, the Christian can begin to move from this into the meaning of the Incarnation, where God becomes his own sign because he has that to signify for which only he suffices. This is a way into the wonder of the Incarnation which is not impeded at the outset by familiar polemic and does not start by trying to define, but by trying to understand. God as his own sign, the divine involved in the human, the historical becoming the expression of the eternal: this germ is already present in the whole Quranic idea of the divine sign. We have been much too hopeless, much too dogged, much too dull, about our Christian theological relationships to the world of Islam. We have been much too unwilling to recognize our allies on the other side, perhaps because we were afraid of disturbing either our communal security or our theological lethargy.

All these may well inspire a Christian hopefulness when we study the Quranic expression of the content of Islam in its deepest Christian potential. With this sort of relationship we do not so much arouse indignation on the other side as excite curiosity. We are not defensive; we are not negative; we are not recriminatory. We are inviting the Muslim to take his own Islam so seriously that he begins to reckon with the significance of Christ. And this is what is meant by a Christian validity in studying Islam. It is not implied that we can in any way cease to be sensitive to the traditional Muslim negation of what is central to our faith; most of all this capacity of God to come (in Islam God only *sends*; in the gospel he *comes*), and this capacity of God in Christ to suffer (suffering in the broad Islamic view is incompatible with the sovereignty of God). But precisely because these beliefs are so distinctive and so crucial, we have to pioneer the way for them into the Muslim soul, by means which will, within the Holy Spirit, most likely ensure their comprehension.

The Christian Necessity of Apprehending Islam

It follows from all this that the Christian Church is in tremendous need of recognizing and knowing the meaning of Islam. For long centuries there has been a kind of immunity. If we talk at all, we tend to shout through the windows as we pass by in the street; we do not sit and talk across the hearth or over the table, as man to man. We keep within our communal securities. They have their book, we have ours; they have their system, we have ours. We live in this tragic insulation from our fellowmen. Religion in the Middle East has been chronically divisive. The reasons for this go far back and they must be understood. If you are an Armenian Christian, Islam is likely to be emotionally symbolized for you by the Turks who murdered your grandparents. If you are a Copt or a Greek in this overwhelming context of the Muslim world, you naturally seek security in insulation; you find satisfaction in being different, and so you tend instinctively to repudiate what emphasizes the commonness of humanity because it destroys your insulating distinctiveness. You find your peace in being unlike your fellowmen. A great deal of this is a direct consequence of the Muslim concept of toleration. You are free to remain what you were born, not free to become—except, of course, in the *direct* of the mosque. So you have this thousand-year-old concept of Christianity as

an introverted thing, recruited from among those born of Christian parents, but with no essential relationship to humanity outside that accident of birth.

Now this security, however understandable, has to give way to a willingness to be exposed. With this willingness to be exposed must go a lively and informed understanding of contemporary Islam, a sensitive reckoning with the tensions within it. Though the world is in such rapid flux, there seem to be many Christians who suppose that Islam is incurably static. When you talk to them about developments within Islam they say: "But they are not Islam; Islam is the old thing which our predecessors two generations ago described so honestly." Islam reformed, goes the famous and foolish dictum, is Islam no longer. Some people seem to have a vested interest in insisting that Islam never changes. When it does, they are left behind the times, and their concepts and relationships no longer fit. We must be willing to study and to enter sympathetically into the tensions and stresses of the contemporary world as they bear upon the Muslim. For we are living in a world that is moving more and more into a common history. The old immunities of seclusion have gone and the theological seclusion should go too. This is not, of course, to say that we should accept at their face value all pretentious Islamic claims. There has been, as we shall see in a moment, a great flood of ideology, partly because Islam has become self-responsible. A generation ago it was purely an academic question what Islam thought or taught about economic justice or racial relationships—an academic question, because it was the British in India, the Dutch in Indonesia, who decided what needed deciding. But when national self-assertion gives you a new historic control over your own destiny, your ideology surges into life, because the questions are no longer academic. And in this surge of ideology there is plenty of whistling in the dark. There are a lot of pretentious, verbose, aggressive, artificial, superficial claims. But while sensing the superficiality, we must develop a lively sympathy for the situation as a whole. So the changing phenomenon of Islam in the full tide of twentieth-century self-responsibility must be a constant theme of Christian study and relationship. We must try to penetrate imaginatively into what it means to be a Muslim, and then relate to this the significance of Christ. When we do so, we find endless opportunities.

So may I simply put before you these double duties: the duty of a Christian aliveness in relation to Muslim thought, and the duty of the necessary undergirding of intelligent study. These two together really involve what has already been hinted at—the contemporary crisis for Islam when the Christian gospel comes to bear upon it. I think it is fair to say that the real beginnings of Christian-Muslim consultation lie before us. The sense that ideology is sufficient, the belief that Islam "has what it takes", the trust in statehood (which is not confined to Muslims), the idea which dominates Israel as well as Pakistan that statehood is the answer to all problems—get independence and you get right—these slogans of contemporary Islam are running more deeply into the intractability of human nature. The old alibis that things were not right because of the imperialists (which had considerable truth, of course) recede with the passing of time. The contemporary mentality of most people in the Middle East when they think and talk about colonialism is at least two decades behind historical reality. This may not be true of Africa. There does come a time when the old alibis which explain the discrepancy between what ought to be and what is cease to make sense, and increasingly the diagnosis, if it is honest, must be inward.

What happens when a religion of law really confronts the inadequacy of law to actualize the good of which it speaks? Given an imaginative Christian relationship, it is fair to say that at least some in Islam are heading right into a central concern of the gospel; the remaking of human nature. The President of Egypt in his book, *The Philosophy of the Revolution*, says that the commodity he most looked for on the eve of the revolution was an unselfish Egyptian. You have on almost every hand in the Muslim world the collapse of political forms of democracy, because they do not deliver the goods of social justice. So they are displaced or replaced by governments basing their power on military action. But though a change of government may have certain beneficial consequences, it does not change human nature. Indeed, tyranny is only sharpened when the traditional curbs on it are removed. You may need undemocratic patterns to get immediate results, but you accumulate long-term problems of tyranny and the suppression of human expression. Now I am not suggesting, of course, that the Christian world has all the

answers. But in Christ you have a radical faith which confronts the problems of the remaking of man.

Ultimately your idealism, if it is honest, brings you in confrontation with yourself. How many people are all too willing to cry out, "O wretched man! O wretched capitalist! O wretched imperialist! O wretched communist!" But the Pauline phrase is "O wretched man that *I* am. Who shall deliver *me*?" The Christian diagnosis is radical and immediate and offers you newness of life. When the Egyptian regime began in 1952 in Cairo, the New Testament made the headlines every morning, for the simple reason that the new regime was called in Arabic by the identical phrase that describes the New Testament, *all 'ahd al-jadid*, the New Era.

Now what is the significance of the newness of life that Christ brings to the strivings of violent or ideological reformers in the contemporary world? Here is perhaps the core of the contemporary crisis of Christian faith and significance for the world of Islam. This is in many of its meanings precisely the crisis which underlies the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. Perhaps there are some in thinking Islam today who are on the road to Damascus. Ideology is not enough. Ideological solutions presuppose a basis outside themselves in the remaking of man. The ultimate problem is not the sins I do but the sin I am: the intractability of human nature. If you believe in Islam, you must attend to the problem of non-Islam, that is to say, the capacity of man to assert false absolutes, to refuse the submission that God requires.

What does the divine sovereignty do about this? In the depths of Christian theology you learn that a divine relationship to the human situation which is not a redemptive one is not finally sovereign. Can we so make plain the significance of Christ that Muslims will be confronted with its immediate reality in the context of their contemporary search? There are certain signs that Muslims are beginning in some quarters to take an altogether new stock of the meaning of the cross.

The Contemporary Crisis of Islam for Christianity

Along with this there goes the contemporary crisis of Islam for Christianity. Can the Christian Church rise to this? Have we the resources in patience and in personnel? Have we our roots adequately in the mind of Christ? There is a very real

sense in which the task that Islam imposes upon the Christian Church calls for the most authentically Christian qualities. How can we be arrogant about the gospel of the lowliness of Bethlehem? How can we be militant about the meaning of the cross? How can we say: in this sign conquer, when the sign itself is the repudiation of conquest? Are we imaginative enough, are we great-souled enough, to keep the priorities right? To try so to live in the midst of Muslim apologetics that we set the questions where the answers must belong? How easy to be manœuvred by the demands of Islam into some posture of spirit or into some area of debate which disserves the gospel even while it claims to champion it. The test of Islam for contemporary Christianity is no less than our capacity to live and speak within the mind of Christ.

On its last Sunday evening, the Jerusalem Summer School took a devotional walk from the Syrian Church of St. Mark in the old city (which is one of the possible locations of the Upper Room) to the Garden of Gethsemane. *En route* we read passages appropriate, for example, to the crossing of the Kedron, and engaged in intercession. But before we left the Church which stands on the site of the house of the Last Supper, we read a part of Psalm 118, which is likely the hymn sung before the disciples went out to the Mount of Olives. There at the end of Psalm 118 is the sentence: "This is the day which the Lord hath fashioned, the day of salvation, the day of demand, the day of expression: this is the day which the Lord hath made for the people of the Lord... We will be glad... Bind the sacrifice with cords... We will be glad, and rejoicing in the day which the Lord hath fashioned for our witness, we will bend ourselves to its demands."

This is the crisis of the demands of Islam for the contemporary Church.

BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY IN THE LIGHT OF GOD'S REVELATION IN CHRIST

By Paul D. Clasper*

The inability of Christians to adequately appreciate, contact, learn from, or testify to their Buddhist neighbours has been felt by all of us living in predominantly Buddhist lands. I believe that a good part of this barrier is due to a faulty theological understanding of the relationship of both Buddhism and Christianity, as religions, to God's revelation in Christ. A distorted understanding of the Gospel and the relation of Christ to the forms of life and worship in which Christians express their faith, combines with ignorance and unconcern as to the other faith. When the human elements of fear, suspicion and pride add to this we have the situation which makes fruitful conversations, to say nothing of evangelism, practically impossible. It is my belief that clarification at this point can and will lead to a breaking down of many of the walls and the building of better bridges for the coming encounter. This will be a kind of final test and check on any theoretical construction. Does the theological understanding really further or impede the encounter for which we long? How this statement of the problem affects the attitude of Christians to Buddhists will be seen in the course of this paper.

It is utterly confusing to seek to limit our thinking to a comparison of the Buddhist religion with the Christian religion; as though we could compare the Christian and Buddhist idea of God, or ultimate reality; or compare and evaluate Buddhist and Christian social organization or ascetic practice. This may have some value. But the whole approach precludes from the start the understanding which we most need.

This kind of comparison easily leads to sentimentally comparing the best of his with the worst of ours, or dogmatically comparing the best of ours with the worst of his. From this vantage

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point neither the cause of truth or good personal relations can be served. What we really need to see is how the whole sphere of man's religion appears in the light of God's gracious, redeeming revelation. Here the line is not between this religion and that; but, first of all, between God's revelation and man's response to that revelation, or the human activity which we designate as man's religion. In this, the Christian religion shows many kinships with the other religions of the world. Religious man, as man, has much in common, especially when we press beneath the surface dissimilarities to the more profound motifs which underlie diverse expressions. The real question of theological evaluation is not how does the Buddhist religion compare with the Christian religion, but how is man's religion, by whatever name and tradition, seen and related to God's revelation in Christ.

Paul Tillich has pointed out in a remarkable sermon on "The New Being" that the Apostle Paul was not remotely interested in this question of the comparison of religions. Commenting on the text, "For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creation," Tillich expresses the spirit of the Apsotle when he says, "Don't compare your religion and our religion, your rites and our rites, your prophets and our prophets, your priests and our priests, the pious amongst you, and the pious amongst us. All this is of no avail! And above all don't think that we want to convert you to English or American Christianity, to the religion of the Western world. We do not want to convert you to us, not even to the best of us. This would be of no avail. We want only to show you something we have seen and to tell you something we have heard; That in the midst of the old creation there is a New Creation, and that this New Creation is manifest in Jesus who is called the Christ."[1]

Man—The Religious Animal

Edwin Lewis has well said that, "Man's religion, quite irrespective of the form it may take, witnesses to his indestructible conviction of the mystery of things of his own deep and perchance baffling significance. Only persons can be religious, because only persons can think about themselves in relation to a Higher and a Beyond."[2]

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[1] Tillich, Paul, *The New Being*, Scribners, pp: 17, 18.

[2] Lewis, E., *A Philosophy of the Christian Revelation*, Harpers, p. 18.

Religious man, then, reveals the fact that he has a capacity to apprehend that Beyond and make some response to it. From the standpoint of revelation this means that the source of our Being, God, is able to communicate with those He has created. This is what the Bible knows as the revelation of God through creation. Emil Brunner writes that, "Even the most primitive polytheistic or prepolytheistic idolatrous religion is unintelligible without the presupposition of the universal revelation of God which has been given to all men through creation."[3] It is because of this that St. Paul can recognize that among the men of Lystra, "God hath not left without witness" (Acts 14: 17) and in Athens he declares that they ignorantly worship an Unknown God and that this is possible because they were created in order that they should seek after Him (Acts 17: 27). There is, then, that in the religious life of men which we must acknowledge as the effect of the stirring of the Divine Spirit in their hearts. As Luther said, "God has implanted such light and intelligence in human nature, that it may give a token, and moreover a picture of His divine governance, that He is the sole Lord and creator of all creature."[4]

But the religious life of man reveals something more than this God-given capacity to apprehend the Divine revelation. It also reveals the sinful blindness which results from his attempt to receive and possess this truth on his own terms and for his own self-chosen ends. In the same passage, in fact, in the same sentence, which St. Paul speaks of the original revelation he also speaks of the original sin of all men: "Because that, knowing God, they glorified Him not as God....but became vain in their reasonings....and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things" (Rom. 1: 21 f). Brunner comments that "The original sin of man breaks out first of all, and mainly in his religion; the essence of original sin is man's apostasy and his inveterate tendency to be absorbed in himself....man in his religion is essentially eudaemonistic and anthropocentric in tendency, if not actually self-centered. Even

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[3] Brunner, E., *Revelation and Reason*, Westminster, p. 262.

[4] Luther, M., E. A. 9, 4, quoted *Ibid.*, p. 263.

in his worship of God man seeks himself, his own salvation; even in his surrender to the Deity he wants to find his own security."[5]

When we turn to Buddhism and Christianity we will find abundant confirmation of this two-fold thesis. Whether Buddhists are atheistic or reverently agnostic on the question of God, there is no doubt as to the way being a total response which reveals man's kinship with the whole. As Baron von Hugel so aptly pointed out, "the observation of Buddhists as to the sickening character of all mere change, that their longing for Nirvana for the complete cessation of all consciousness such as theirs, thus penetrated with a sense of mere change and hence of pure desolation. I think that this is quite magnificent as a prolegomenon of all religion. I take it to my mind quite simply as one of the most striking effects of the Real Presence of God also in those men's minds. It is because they have the dim, inarticulate sense of what the Abiding means that the mere slush of change is so sickening"[6].

For Christianity, it will suffice at this point to say that the greatest threat to the understanding of God's revelation has been the ineradicable tendency to turn the revelation into a new law in which man seeks by means of what Luther calls 'work-righteousness' to make himself secure on his own terms. The fact that this has sometimes taken on a legalistic, sometimes a mystical, and sometimes a nationalistic turn only shows the subtlety by which religious man can pervert the truth in his self-centredness.

Man, then, in his religion especially, reveals his great glory—his capacity for relatedness to the whole, and his great misery—his propensity to make himself the centre and so bring perversion and destruction to all that he touches.

God's Judgement of Man's Religion

God has revealed himself through Jesus Christ as Agape-love, the creator and Source of life, whose untiring energy streams forth to communicate with man and sustain him in a fellowship of love. The Divine Energy is directed to this end of drawing men and enabling them to grow in this relationship of love to God and full participation in the Father's family. As such,

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[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 264, 266.

[6] Hugel, von, *Selected Letters*, J. M. Dent and Sons, p. 364.

"God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved" (John 3: 17).

Nevertheless this self-communicating love finds man always as religious man. That is, not only with a capacity to know and receive, but with a religion which shows the marks of his attempt to have God on his own terms. Man's religion turns out to be the most severe barrier to the ultimate purpose of God. Therefore God's revelation is first known as an opposition to that which man has erected against God.

It was Luther who saw so clearly that revelation always finds its greatest obstacle in the egocentric piety of man's religion, and his words are equally penetrating for an Animist, a Roman Catholic or a Protestant Christian, or a Buddhist. "Outwardly crude things are only trifling compared with what is taught about growing pious with works, and setting up a worship of God according to our reason. For in this way the innocent blood is mostly highly dishonoured and blasphemed. The heathen have committed far greater sin by their worshipping sun and moon, which they regarded as the true worship of God, than they have with any other sins. Therefore the piety of man is vain blasphemy and the greatest of all the sins that he commits. Similarly the creature which regards it as an act of worship and piety to flee from the world is far worse in God's sight than any other sin, and this is the state of popes and monks and of everything that seems good to the world, and yet is without faith."[7]

Man's heart, then, is, as Calvin said, an "idol factory", and Barth has this in mind when he says, "It is an anti-God who has first to be known as such and discarded when the truth comes to him."[8]

As a Christian discovers this to be true in his own case he will sense his nearness to his Buddhist neighbour. This is no more a criticism of the Buddhist than it is of the Christian. In fact, it is the seeing of the situation of man, as religious man, first, which breaks down all pride and superiority and enables the Christian man to confront the Buddhist man in their common manhood and common need.

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[7] Luther, M., quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 300.

[8] Barth, K., *Ibid.*, p. 303.

It is not, then, by an extension of man's piety and asceticism, or an intensification or purification of man's "work righteousness" that man reaches God. As Barth says, "Not by any continuing along this way, but only by radically breaking away from it, can we come, not to our own goal but to God's goal, which is the direct opposite of our goal".[9]

God's Gift of Salvation through Christ as the Basis of True Religion

So far in this paper no distinction has been made between Buddhism and Christianity, as two expressions of man's religion, in his capacity for the divine and his attempts at self-salvation and self-sanctification. This kinship of the two has been maintained because a failure to realize this is the cause of that disastrous sense of superiority which has characterized the relationship of Christianity to non-Christian religions. The identification of God's revelation with the Christian religion has been of the most paralysing events in the life of the Church in modern times. It has resulted both in a falsification of the Gospel and the misunderstanding of non-Christian religions.

Christianity, in so far as it is also man's religion, shows all the propensities to idolatry and self-righteousness found in other forms of man's religion. The New Testament bears realistic witness to the struggle between God's word in His revelation and the frailties of human religion, even as the prophets of the Old Testament were constantly engaged in confronting the unbelief of the religion of revelation with a fresh encounter with God's word of revelation.

It is of crucial importance for the relationship of Christianity to other religions that this situation to be fully acknowledged in all seriousness. As Barth has said, "It is our business as Christians to apply this judgement first and most acutely to ourselves; and to others, the non-Christians, only in so far as we recognize ourselves in them, *i.e.*, only as we see in them the truth of this judgement of revelation which concerns us, in the solidarity, therefore, in which, anticipating them in both repentance and hope, we accept this judgement to participate in the promise of revelation."[10]

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[9] *Ibid.*, p. 310.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 327.

But this judgement and evaluation, this relativising of the Christian religion, is only possible because of the revelation of God which is not relative, but which represents God in His love communicating Himself to men for their salvation. The New Reality has appeared, as Tillich following St. Paul, has testified. There is something infinitely more to be taken into account in the relation of Christianity to Buddhism than the human factors of man's religion. Ultimately "neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation" (Gal. 6:15).

God who spoke in many and various ways to our fathers by the prophets has in these last days spoken to us by a Son, and that to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, and that all of this is from God who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation (Heb. 1:1, 2; John 1:12; 2 Cor. 5:18).

But this means that there does stand a unique relationship between God's revelation and the religion of revelation, that is Christianity. While they are not identical, and the Christian religion can in no sense justify itself, it is possible, and it actually happens, that God does, in his grace, justify and sanctify and make us of the Christian religion in the same way that he justifies, sanctifies, and uses justified sinners. In this sense, and in this sense only, there is a "true religion". That is, in the sense that there are justified and sanctified sinners, there is a justified and sanctified religion. This is wholly due to the initiative and grace of God. There is a true religion, then, through the grace of God. It is true and continues to be true only by its constant realization of this grace.

Barth has summed this up admirably by saying, "That there is a true religion is an event in the act of the grace of God in Jesus Christ. To be more precise, it is an event in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. To be even more precise, it is an event in the existence of the Church and the children of God. The existence of the Church of God and the children of God means that true religion exists even in the world of human religion. In other words, there is a knowledge and worship of God and a corresponding human activity. We can only say of them that they are corrupt. They are an attempt born of lying and wrong and committed to utile means. And yet we have also to say of them that

(in their corruption) they do reach their goal. In spite of the lying and wrong committed, in spite of the futility of the means applied, God is really known and worshipped, there is a genuine activity of man as reconciled to God. The Church and the children of God and therefore the bearers of true religion live by the grace of God."[11]

This means that God's revelation does confront the world of man's self-assertive religion, and especially through the instrumentality of His body, the Church, as the justified and sanctified sinners who by Grace live by Grace. It is this standing in grace, which is the real source of strength as it confronts the words of man's religion, so typically represented by Buddhism. In its own weakness it is strong. In its own strength it is impotent and irrelevant. When it lives by the realization that it has nothing in itself but what it has received from God, then it knows that it does not have light and glory of itself. If it is not its own possession, then it also cannot be taken from it. Then and then alone does it have the commission and authority to be a missionary religion, confronting the world of religions as the one true religion with absolute self-confidence to invite and challenge it to abandon its ways and to start on the Christian way.[12]

This understanding of the Church's essence and its relation to the religions of mankind also illuminates the past failures of the modern missionary movement. The constant temptation has been to look away from this electing love of God to its own inner life. And once the gaze is turned to itself, whether it be to see its ecclesiastical institutions, theological systems, works of philanthropy, inner experiences, moral transformations of individual believers, or the wider effects of Christianity on the world, then the secularization of Christianity is well underway. The real basis of her life and strength has been abandoned and, whether she is aware of it or not, self-justification, which is idolatry, unbelief and sin, has replaced the reception of grace as the basis of her life. Now, with what Barth calls the "unteachable ferocity of a secret despair of faith"[13] another support is given to the Christian religion, and no amount of subjective piety can obscure the real shift of the centre of gravity.

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[11] *Ibid.*, p. 344.
[12] *Ibid.*, p. 357.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 357.

The New Life in Christ as Fulfilment of the Religious Quest of Man

One question remains to be asked. Is there any sense, or in what sense, does the new life in Christ complete or fulfil the quest of which every man's religious life is the expression? Is there any continuity between the old way, whatever form it assumes, and the new way?

Here I would like to make available for our discussion the latest contribution of Bishop Stephen Neill on this theme, as found in his recent book *Creative Tension.* I include it because it proceeds, in the main on similar lines to that which has been taken in this paper. But he ends with a more positive note than the more pugnacious treatment of Barth might seem to leave.

Bishop Neill states that "we believe in Christ as the fulfiller of all things. But the considerations alluded to....raise the question whether he must not first come as the destroyer before he can be the fulfiller, whether the only way in which he can fulfil human aspirations is first to reduce them to ashes".[14] He takes as an example the relationship of Christianity to Judaism. Christ comes as the new which cannot be neatly contained in the old. To cling to the old would be to resist God's revelation in Christ. But it is impossible to look back on the whole heritage of Judaism from the Christological point of view. From this perspective we see the whole movement as part of that historical preparation which found its culmination in Christ. Bishop Neill then suggests that, "May it be that we have here the clue that will guide us in the intricate labyrinth of the study of other religions and of the relationship of the Gospel to them."[15]

I will close by quoting Bishop Neill's concluding paragraph which admirably sums up his own conclusions on this matter, and which I believe sums up the direction to which I have been seeking to point in viewing Buddhism and Christianity in the light of God's revelation in Christ. "The tendency, in the comparative study of religions, has been to begin with the Yea; to take a non-Christian religion at its highest, to compare it with the biblical doctrine of Christ and to yield enthusiastic approval

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[14] Neill, S., *Creative Tension,* Edinburgh House Press, p. 28.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 29.

to those points that commend themselves to the Christian conscience; but then to go on, perhaps a little regretfully, to the Nay, to point out that all this is still imperfect and needs its fulfilment in Christ. Should we perhaps proceed in precisely the opposite way, and recognize quite frankly that the Nay comes first, that Christ is the Destroyer before he can be the Saviour? We have recognized this in our own personal experience of passing from death to life. The judgment of Christ had been passed on everything that we were before we knew him; and yet the identity and continuity of our personal life has been maintained. Every religious system is as much as articulated unity as an individual human life. Each one, in its autonomy, in its aim of self-realization, is so far in rebellion against God and so under judgement. But this need not be the last word. As in the case of Judaism, we can learn to read these other religions Christologically, to look upon them from the vantage point of the Gospel. We can see that there is much that must be destroyed. Nevertheless, there are some things that can pass through the scorching fires on the judgement of Christ and rise again into a joyful resurrection. We may be sure that God, who has worked so long and so patiently among the nations, will see to it that if the nations and their faiths in the end turn to Christ nothing of value will be lost, and that whatever of worth the other religions have gathered in the course of their separate pilgrimage will in some way be brought into the riches of his everlasting city."[16]

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 29.

THE COSMIC CHRIST

By Prof. Joseph Sittler*

A DOCTRINE of redemption is meaningful only when it swings within the larger orbit of a doctrine of creation. For God's creation of earth cannot be redeemed in any intelligible sense of the word apart from a doctrine of the cosmos which in his home, his definite place, the theatre of his selfhood under God, in co-operation with his neighbour, and in caring-relationship with nature, his sister. "Unless one is prepared to accept a dualism which condemns the whole physical order as being not of God and interprets redemption simply as release from the physical order, then one is forced to raise the question of cosmic redemption, not in contrast with but as an implicate of personal redemption. Physical nature cannot be treated as an indifferent factor—as the mere stage and setting of the drama of personal redemption. It must either be condemned as in itself evil, or else it must be brought within the scope of God's redemptive act" (Galloway, Allan D.: *The Cosmic Christ*, Harper and Brothers, Publishers, N.Y., 1951, p. 205). Unless the reference and the power of the redemptive act include the whole of man's experience and environment, straight out to its farthest horizon, then the redemption is incomplete. There is and will always remain something of evil to be overcome. And more. The actual man in his existence will be tempted to reduce the redemption of man to what purgation, transformation, forgiveness and blessedness is available by an "angelic" escape from the cosmos of natural and historical fact—and in that option accept some sort of dualism which is as offensive to biblical theology as it is beloved of all Gnosticism, then as now.

The problem forced upon us by the events of the present decade is not soluble by the covert dualism of nature and grace. At a certain period in Christian thought and practical life, this dualism worked itself out in the dualism of Church and world, of spiritual and temporal. But the time when Christian theology and Christian life could operate with such a view of things is

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long past. The view was never appropriate to the organic character of biblical speech; in the present state of man's knowledge in all areas it has become unintelligible.

As we seek for a vision of Christ ample enough to draw us toward unity in his Church we would do well to turn back the pages of western theological reflection and attend to a Father in the Church whose understanding of Christ the light was not able to settle for statements less majestic than the apostrophe to him in the first chapter of Colossians. From a recent and careful summary of the thought of Irenaeus, I quote the following paragraph:

> "In Irenaeus....there are not two orders of goodness, but only one. All goodness, whether it belongs to this world or to the final consummation, is a manifestation of the grace of God. It is the same grace of God which sustains nature even in its fallen state and which confers salvation in Jesus Christ. The residual goodness in nature can even be regarded as an anticipation of foretaste of that salvation. The same ....appears also in Irenaeus' attitude toward the sacraments as compared with that of the Church of the Middle Ages. For Irenaeus the union of spiritual and material benefit in the Eucharist symbolizes the ultimate unity of nature and grace implied in Christian salvation. But for Aquinas the fact that the sacraments are administered in a material element is merely God's gracious concession to man's regrettably sensuous nature" (P. II, QI, A.8).

For Irenaeus, the Incarnation and saving work of Jesus Christ meant that the promise of grace was held out to the whole of nature, and that henceforth nothing could be called common or unclean. For the Church of the Middle Ages, on the other hand, nature was essentially common, and, if not positively unclean, at least seriously deficient in that shining whiteness of the saints in the empyrean heaven, and essentially incapable of sharing in such glory? (Galloway, Allan D.: *The Cosmic Christ*, Harper and Brothers Publishers, N.Y., 1951, p. 128 ff).

The doctrinal cleavage, particularly fateful in western Christendom, has been an element in the inability of the Church to relate the powers of grace to the vitalities and processes of nature. At the very time, and in that very part of the world where

men's minds were being deepeningly determined by their understanding and widened control of the powers of nature they were so identifying the realm of history and the moral as the sole realm of grace as to shrink to no effect the biblical christology of nature. In the midst of vast changes in man's relation to nature the sovereignty and scope of grace was, indeed, attested and liberated by the Reformers. But post-Reformation consolidations of their teaching permitted their Christic recovery of all the nature as a realm of grace to slip back into a minor theme.

In the Enlightenment the process was completed. Rationalism, on the one hand, restricted redemption by grace to the moral soul, and Pietism, on the other hand, turned down the blaze of the Colossian vision so radically that its *ta panta* was effective only as a moral or mystical incandescence. Enlightenment man could move in on the realm of nature and virtually take it over because grace had either ignored or repudiated it. A bit of God died with each new natural conquest; the realm of gra e retreated as more of the structure and process of nature was claimed by now autonomous man. The rood-screen in the Church, apart from its original meaning, has become a symbol of man's devout but frightened thought permitting to fall asunder what God joined together.

Is it again possible to fashion a theology catholic enough to affirm redemption's force enfolding nature, as we have affirmed redemption's force enfolding history? That we should make that effort is, in my understanding, the commanding task of this moment in our common history. We are being driven to claim the world of nature for God's Christ just, as in the time of Augustus, the Church was driven to claim the world of history as the city of God, for his Lordship and purpose. For fifteen centuries the Church has declared the power of grace to conquer egocentricity, to expose idolatry, to inform the drama of history with holy meaning. But in our time we have beheld the vision and promises of the Enlightenment come to strange and awesome maturity. The cleavage between grace and nature is complete. Man's identity has been shrunken to the dimensions of privatude within social determinism. The doctrine of the creation has been made a devout datum of past time. The mathematization of meaning in the technology and its reduction of operational terms in philosophy has left no mental space wherein to declare the nature,

as well as history, as the theatre of grace and the scope of redemption.

The matter might be put another way: the address of Christian thought is most weak precisely where man's ache is most strong. We have had, and have, a christology of the moral soul, a christology of history, and, if not a christology of the ontic, affirmations so huge as to fill the space marked out by ontological questions. But we do not have, at least not in such effective force as to have engaged the thought of the common life, a daring, penetrating, life-affirming christology of nature. The theological magnificence of cosmic christology lies, for the most part, still tightly folded in the Church's innermost heart and memory. Its power is nascent among us all in our several styles of teaching, preaching, worship; its waiting potency is available for release in kerygmatic theology, in moral theology, in liturgical theology, in sacramental theology. And the fact that our separate traditions incline us to one or another of these as central does not diminish either the fact, or our responsibility. For it is true of us all that the imperial vision of Christ as coherent in *ta panta* has not broken open the powers of grace to diagnose, judge, and heal the ways of men as they blasphemously strut about this hurt and threatened world as if they owned it. Our vocabulary of praise has become personal, pastoral, too purely spiritual, static. We have not affirmed as inherent in Christ—God's proper man for man's proper selfhood and society—the world-political, the world economical, the world æsthetic, and all other commanded orderings of actuality which flow from the ancient summons to tend this garden of the Lord. When atoms are disposable to the ultimate hurt then the very atoms must be reclaimed for God and his will.

If, now we put together the threat to nature and a christology whose scope is as endless as that threat is absolute, do we, perhaps, gain a fresh and urgent vision of the call of God to the unity of the Church, and some help toward its definition and obedience? Nothing that is here affirmed questions or slights the ways we have gone, or suggests that their continuation is not necessary and good. Incessant biblical study, penetrating theological analysis, the expansion of the scope and the deepening of our various traditions, and mutual acknowledgement in thanksgiving

of the blessing God has bestowed upon us all in our several ways and works—all of this must go on.

The alembic in which the dynamics of unity stir with life, fuse, give new forms to Godly vitalities, and have the power to generate new obediences amidst old recalcitrancies—is history. That is why there is such a discipline as history of doctirne. For this study discloses that doctrinal statement and development is confession-thinking to the glory of God amidst historical denials or pretensions which would usurp the glory. It has always been within the clutch of a definite historical threat, or necessity, or a sheer intolerable malaise that the Church has found her teaching voice. Doctrines are not born out of doctrines in an unchanging vacuum. Doctrines are evoked, clarified, refined, given force and precision within the challenge of exact circumstances. The facts of history are the exciters of insight; the nature of the moment's need engenders the doctrine to serve and bless it.

This dynamism that characterizes the Church's stance and movement throughout her history, this momentum and promise inherent in the Church by the spirit, furnishes us with hope as we try to construct a fresh doctrinal counterpoint between the *ta panta* of the claims of Christ and the facts of nature's pathetic openness to glorious use as to brutal rapacity.

We live in a *kairos* where Christ and chaos intersect, a moment in which the fullest Christology is marvellously congruent with man's power-founded anxiety and need. Contemporary man expresses his hurt in terms of his broken or uncertain relationship to society and nature. We cannot, indeed, extrude from these the substance of his God-relationship. But it might be possible so to say to him that he entertain the possibility of its truth, that the problems that appear in this earthy and societal relationship are not soluble in terms of it. For created life is a triad of God, and man, and nature. If we meet him where he hurts he may be given new ears and eyes for that triadic Word from which the Church lives in confessed acknowledgment, and under which all men live by creation.

THE WORD OF GOD AND THE LIVING FAITHS OF MAN*

SINCE 1955 the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council have been engaged in a study of "The Word of God and the Living Faiths of Men" in an effort to take up in a fresh and relevant way the question of the relationship of Christian faith to the other living faiths and the encounter of Christians with men of these faiths. At Kuala Lumpur in 1959, the East Asia Christian Conference proposed that the study should give particular attention to the interaction of religion and society and that the study program should consist of a series of regional consultations with reference to the major religions of Asia. Accordingly, regional consultations have been held in Jerusalem, India, Hong Kong and Burma. This report is an attempt to sum up the findings of the study to date.

We feel that we are able, at the present juncture, to say some thing about the following matters:

1. The realization that these faiths are indeed living faiths.

2. The new awareness of our human solidarity, consequent kinship with other men as men, and the common involvements in challenges and opportunities which we face together with non-Christians in our national and international life in Asia.

3. The need for a re-assessment of our theological understanding of the relationship of the Gospel to the religions.

4. A fresh understanding of the consequent implications of these new emphases for the communication of the Gospel, on the one hand, and for the self-understanding of the Church, on the other.

I. THE RENAISSANCE OF RELIGIONS

The religions of Asia are living realities. This was one of the facts strongly emphasized in each of the consultations. The

* The Word of God and the Living Faiths of Men is the final report of the Commission of the Department of Studies of the World Council of Churches prepared at the Nagpur summing up meeting March 1961, after a series of regional consultations in Asia for which Rev. H. B. Partin was largely responsible.

resources of religious faiths are being directed toward the efforts for national reconstruction in the context of the total cultural transformation of Asian peoples. The striving for human values such as social justice, human rights, and a better life for the individual gives rise to and is strongly supported by the rediscovery of these values in the religious traditions. This has in turn led to a restatement of fundamentals of the historic faiths to meet the demands of the new age.

The forces of the new age have been very real factors in awakening these ancient faiths to new life. Some of these forces are the impact of modern science and technology, Western liberalism, the spread of Communist ide logy and, not least, the work of Christian missions and churches. The combination of these forces has created a revolutionary situation in which the traditional faiths face new demands which call in question their continued hold. As a result, the historic faiths of Asia have assimilated values and emphases from each other as well as from Christianity. They are now seeking to establish their claim to provide adequate dynamic of faith for modern Asian man. The study of classical scriptures such as the Confucian Four Books, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Lotus Sutra*, and the Quran is being revived, and there is a trend to commend them as universal scriptures, adequate for the present time and for all time. Today other faiths claim to be universal and missionary in a new sense. Indeed, some of these religions, for example, Buddhism and Hinduism, claim to have a more adequate basis for universality than does Christianity.

The fact of the multi-religious character of the population in many Asian countries has provided an urge to dissociate the cultural element from the religious in order to create a sense of national solidarity and a basis for common action. Furthermore, there is a quest for a common culture.

A certain measure of secularization of culture is inherent in this process. This has been welcomed by some religious groups as making possible the recovery of the true meaning of religion and its relation to secular life; such groups are making attempts to evolve a new secularism with a religious motivation. This new secularism stands alongside the secularism which protests against all religions. The tendency towards secularization, however, is challenged by certain orthodox groups in some countries which try to reassert the old religio-cultural unity as the only basis for

national wholeness. In order to safeguard national unity, leaders in some other countries in Asia have thought it necessary to assert the religion and culture of the majority by proclaiming a state religion.

The general loosening of the bond between culture and religion has had its effect on the Christian minorities in these Asian lands who have been enabled to begin to dissociate the Christian faith from Western culture and to identify themselves increasingly with the culture of their own countries. They are making serious efforts to re-establish their kinship with the people of whom they are part. One consequence of this is a more sympathetic and understanding attitude towards other faiths as part of their common heritage.

All this is a part of the process of gaining self-understanding and self-esteem of Asian peoples which lies at the heart of all contemporary Asian expressions of national selfhood.

The renaissance is not confined to the intellectual and literature of the population, but is also expressed in the revival of devotional and cultic practices as, for example, renewed stress on meditation in Buddhism and temple worship in Hinduism. The trends are so pervasive and widespread that we may well say that we are seeing the signs of a general transformation. Undoubtedly, there are pockets of undeveloped areas into which the new ideas and forces have not yet penetrated. Also, we must admit that we do not have sufficient knowledge of all Asian countries. In particular, the Church in China has not been able to participate in this study and to share information.

In this description of the Asian scene we must remember that various revolutions which successively covered several centuries in the West are taking place simultaneously and within a short period of time in Asia. This in part explains the prevailing climate of contrary and alternating moods which characterizes this generation. Confidence seems to shade off into despair, receptivity to suggestion alternates with sensitiveness to criticism, and the eager anxiety to keep pace with modern progress is in strange contrast to nostalgia for the once glorious past.

II. Awareness of Common Humanity

One significant discovery in the course of the study has been the new emphasis laid in all religions today on the fact of our

common humanity. Of recent times mankind has been thrown together to confront problems that challenge the very existence of man, and men of all faiths have been called on to work together for the common good, the peace of the world, and even for the preservation of life on the earth. In all religions there is a new recognition of the worth and dignity of the human person in relation to other persons constituting what we call society. There is also evidence in contemporary religious renaissance of a recognition of responsible human decisions in the making of history. It would no longer be true to say that Asian religions encourage an attitude of passive resignation and inactivity in the here and now. On the contrary, there is a new activism which draws on religious sources and finds expression in collective endeavour to realize new social goals.

Undoubtedly, this truth of our common humanity has always been a part of Biblical teaching that God has created of one blood all nations, but in the history of the Christian Church this truth has not been given full expression. Therefore, in this process the Christian has also gained a new understanding of what God has done for men in Christ as having been done for all men.

This re-discovery of our common humanity has made possible a common action and a better understanding of the basis of such action in each other's faith. But, at the same time, it has resulted in a more conscious endeavour to emphasize the fundamental differences in the core of beliefs and practices in the different religions; in some instances, the core seems to be growing harder and more distinctive. Nevertheless, as never before in human history men of all religions and adherents of secular faiths seem prepared to join forces not only to fight against common evils but also to work for positive ends. Participation in common enterprises for the reorganization of family, society and state has become meaningful both to Christians and to men of other faiths.

Not all Christians, however, are adequately equipped to exercise this ministry of participation to which this generation has been called. One of the questions with which the consultations wrestled was that of how this participation can be truly Christian. It was repeatedly pointed out that such participation provides a unique opportunity for a new kind of dialogue between Christians

and others on the nature and destiny of man which has social and evangelistic dimensions. Thus it is an occasion for Christian witness.

III. Theological Restatement

The new meeting with men of other faiths forces us to recognize the necessity for theological restatement. It is too early to anticipate what form such a restatement may take, but it may be possible to indicate some directions in which the process of rethinking should move.

It has become evident that a fresh attempt at a theological statement of the relation of the Gospel to the living faiths of men should not remain entangled in theoretical alternatives such as continuity and discontinuity or general and special revelation. It should rather start from the Biblical message that as God is the creator of all men, so is His salvation in Jesus Christ offered to all men, and that in Him there is a New Creation. He is the Way and the Truth and the Life (John 14:6). In Him God's covenant with His people was consummated and through His cross and His glorious resurrection, He has given to all men of all nations "access in one Spirit to the Father" (Eph. 2:18). It is by "the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead" (Rom. 8:11) that we have hope. That Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, grants us sonship and calls us out of fear together with the whole creation which "itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21).

God has called His Church to be among men the community of witness to His Salvation and His kingdom. In various ways through the religious and secular movements of our time He is preparing the people to discern the true meaning of this offer of salvation in Christ and to face the decision for or against Him. The Church must not only discern the work of the Spirit in the world but be present in the world, responding to Him and making His presence and lordship known. We cannot explain why God has in His wisdom chosen for Himself the Church to be His witness. In the new encounter with men of other faiths it has become clear to us that we have as Christians nothing in our hands which might from a religious point of view be called superior. Neither in the strength of religious consciousness nor in the depths

of metaphysical thinking, neither in the awareness of harmony with the universe nor in the effort for spiritual self-liberation can we claim as Christians to excel those who are not Christians. But we are called to be obedient. We cannot be obedient to our calling as Christians except in the forms of religious expression, which at its deepest level is an expression of our common humanity.

It is therefore necessary to get to that point theologically where our being called out of the world into the glorious liberty of the children of God immediately places us in solidarity with all men. Perhaps the most profound solidarity with men of other faiths lies in the fact that man is always tempted to use his religiousness in order to assert himself in the face of God. Religious man, even Christian religious man, remains a rebel against God. But it is at this point where we are put into solidarity with other men that our religiousness as Christians which excludes all claims of superiority over others can provide the basis and the climate for genuine communication. Real obedience does not bind us to the set patterns of any one traditional or modern style of Christian living and witness, nor does it prevent us from using any pattern of religion or religionless secularism. It rather frees us to make full use of the language, the thought forms, the customs and the ethos we find in the religious heritage of our country without anxiety about distinguishing between "kernel" and "husk". Obedience, freely rendered, will include our readiness to accept within the one Church a variety of forms of Christian living because obedience is not timeless and static. One can be obedient only concretely. This means that the same obedience to God of necessity takes on different forms in different situations. This fact calls for a new appraisal of syncretism. Through concrete obedience in the encounter and solidarity with various cultures and even segments of cultures, the Church of necessity becomes syncretistic from a cultural point of view that it may render obedinet witness to all men. We want especially to draw attention to the fact that contemporary secularist movements in their variety are part of the common humanity. Therefore, they are to be studied and taken seriously as an important element in the religious situation of our time.

We have become aware, however, that even the new solidarity which is found in our common humanity poses afresh and perhaps more pointedly than ever before the question of the exclusiveness

of God's action in Jesus Christ. In the contemporary religious situation we find men of other faiths as well as secularists of many persuasions earnestly seeking for a new personal understanding of the meaning of life amidst the revolutionary scientific and technological transformations of life in Asia. We are forbidden to minimize the human values which are emerging through the renaissance of religions. At the same time, we are called to proclaim in all humility the uniqueness of God's revelation in our Lord Jesus Christ, "for the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (I Cor. 1:18).

We believe that God, as He has been active in all history since creation, is active in the religious changes of our time. In the light of these changes the theological significance of the religions should be defined in a new way. In the consultations some spoke of the redemptive activity of God even within other faiths, while others preferred to speak of God's forbearance with mankind because of His plan of salvation that the Gospel of His kingdom should be proclaimed to all men. But we were all agreed that such new theological interpretation must be based on a proper understanding of other faiths in their living forms as experienced in actual encounter with their adherents. We are convinced that this will enrich our understanding of our own calling as Christians.

IV. Implications

What has been said above indicates the necessity for a fresh understanding of the whole task of Christian witness. This means that we must review the methods and means so far employed in the communication of the Gospel and, at the same time, we must seek a new understanding of the structure and function of the Church as the bearer of the Gospel. In all the consultations we were constantly reminded of these needs.

From the standpoint of communication we are faced with the difficulty created by the use of traditional Christian vocabulary which is often unintelligible to men of other faiths. An effort should therefore be made to use the religious categories of thought with which others are familiar in order to convey the Christian message. Such usage calls for careful study of meanings and contexts and constant awareness of the possible dangers of defeating the very purpose of our good intention. This must

not, however, deter us from courageously endeavouring to utilize these terms in the service of the Gospel, for they can be filled with Christian content. We should note the freedom with which New Testament writers employed terms and concepts drawn from contemporary religious movements (for example, *archai, exousia, thronoi, stoicheia tou kosmou,* etc.).

The Christian evangelist should study sympathetically similarities in the expression of theological ideas and religious experience in other faiths and use them as points of departure for the communication of Christian truth.

There is further need for seriously experimenting with various methods of dramatic presentation of the Gospel. For example, by using liturgical forms the intellectualism and emotionalism in which the Gospel is often preached can be avoided.

Truth in Christ as the ultimate meaning of the totality of things is relevant to the quest for truth at all levels. In Asian religions the quest for philosophical truth is closely bound up with all religious endeavours. Therefore, in the presentation of the Gospel the relevance of Christian truth to philosophical truth should be recognized. This calls for Christian participation in the contemporary striving of Eastern thought to grapple with the meaning of existence in terms of personality and history. This is a necessary implication of the proclamation of the Gospel of the Person and Work of Christ as the revelation of God in history. Christian institutions of higher learning, including those for the training of the ministry, should take heed of the fundamental task.

Similarly, through participation in the struggle for justice and for an adequate social and political philosophy for our times, Christians should witness to the relevance of the Gospel for the renewal of society and state.

Effective communication of the Gospel is integrally related to a proper self-understanding of the Church, not as an organization setting forth a Christian "system" of doctrine and a Christian "pattern" of society, but as a sign of God's reconciliation with man in Christ. The cultural pattern and the organization of Church life in Asian lands has yet to be emancipated from its historical identification with Western culture. If the Church is

to become indigenous, it is not by cutting itself adrift from Western culture nor by reshaping itself in terms of traditional cultures but by courageously relating itself to the patterns of an emerging culture. This cannot be an artificial process. It will happen only if Christians, in obedience to the Gospel, involve themselves in the dynamic cultural movements of our time. A world renewed in Christ, the New Creation, is the sum and substance of the message of the Church. It is the high calling of the Church to be the earnest of this New Creation.

REVIEW SECTION

CHRISTIAN FAITH AND OTHER FAITHS*

By Dr. Herbert Jai Singh

Few topics in Christian theology are attracting greater attention today than the one dealt with so excellently in this book: The Christian dialogue with other religions. A confluence of many factors has made the study of non-Christian religions especially important for our day: the earlier spade-work in oriental philology, the translation of the sacred books of the East, a vast amount of the comparative study of religions, the renaissance of many of the ancient religions of Asia and Africa and the rise of Communism and existentialism which claim allegiance very similar to religious commitment.

The older methods of comparative religions in which the tendency often was to compare the best in the Christian faith with the worst in other religions must be categorically rejected, both on scientific as well as on the Christian grounds. "The only method which promises results is that of self-exposure, as complete as possible, to the impact of a religion as a whole. The attitude is not that of *theoria*, the dispassionate contemplation which was the ideal of the Greeks, and which leads to nothing more fruitful than intellectual analysis. The new approach is that of engagement, personal involvement in something which is of deep concern to us because it is of deep concern to millions of our fellow human beings" (p. 4).

Only those committed to their own faith can enter with sympathy and discrimination into the heart and soul of another faith. A purely scientific dispassionate analytic attitude lacks that warmth and sensitivity that only committed souls can bring to their study.

The subtitle of the book emphasizes at the outset that it is a *Christian* dialogue with other religions. That means that certain attitudes and perspectives, basically Christian, provide a point of vantage wherefrom the panorama of other religion has been viewed. Firstly, the author believes that the "world, and man within it, has reality, has existence" (p. 7). Secondly, despite the seeming evidence to the contrary, from a short term view of

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* By Stephen Neill. London: Oxford University Press, 1961. Pp. 241. Rs. 16. 80.

historical happenings, there is still purpose and meaning in the world. And thirdly, that time and history are real and unrepeatable, that "the future is a world of glorious possibilities, influenced indeed but not predetermined by the past" (p. 9).

The first word of the dialogue begins with the chapter on Judaism. The history of the Jews is a history of suffering and persecution. The author admits frankly and penitently the Christian's share in it. The alienation is deep, still the author is unwilling to concede to Professor Reinhold Niebuhr's suggestion to let them go their own way. In recent years many Jews have approached Jesus Christ with reverence without acknowledging him as Messiah and Lord. The Christian therefore has the duty, in reverence, humility and penitence, to ask the Jew "to look once again at Jesus Christ, without hate and without prejudice and to ask himself whether there are certain things in the picture that so far he has missed" (p. 38).

The third chapter is a description and analysis of the crisis that has overtaken the world of Islam. A faith nurtured in the cradle of victory and success finds itself frustrated and prostrate in the face of defeat and reverses. There is a mood of wistful anxiety that marks the Muslim everywhere, whether he is in Arabia, Turkey, Pakistan or India. True, there are stirrings of a new life but even these lack clarity and direction. There is the continual conflict of views among the conservative *ulemas*, the modernists, and those who combine regard for the old institutions and forms with a "lively sense of the living, active God who stands behind the religion and a passionate but rational pursuit of that social justice that was once the dominant note of the faith and the dominant goal of its forms and institutions" (p. 55). A meaningful dialogue can take place if Christians will enter it with sympathetic understanding of the perplexities and predicaments of the Muslim world. The desire for a dialogue should not blind us, however, to the differences that divide the two faiths. At the centre of these differences is the denial by the Muslim of the Cross of Jesus Christ by denying its historicity. With full awareness of our differences we are still called to invite the Muslim: "Sir, consider Jesus."

The next chapter is an excellent summary of renascent Hinduism—how it has reacted at different stages to the impact from the West. First, a withdrawal, then equality and reassurance, and finally, a definite feeling of superiority over Western spirituality. There are many leaders of this renaissance but the most outstanding are Mahatma Gandhi, its real architect and Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, its most spectacular showpiece. These are able men, who "have fully studied the Gospel, have weighed it, and have rejected it" (p. 82). Dr. Radhakrishnan, while talking about the equality of all religions, betrays, at the same time, a passionate

hatred of Christianity. The striking features of Western Christianity, according to him, are "intolerance" and "exclusiveness", whereas Hinduism is hospitable to all "types of stages of religious aspirations and endeavour" (p. 82). The Christian dialogue with men of Hindu faith would centre round three basic themes: the value of personality, the meaning of spirituality, and the significance of a religious community, the Church: all this finally to show him the One in "Whom those questions can receive their all-sufficient answer, the Lord Jesus Christ" (p. 98).

The chapter on Buddhism deals with the "doctrine of the Lotus". The Neo-Buddhist proceeds with the conviction that Christianity has been weighed in the balance and found wanting. Only the Buddhist message of *ahimsa* and the path shown by the gracious Buddha can bring peace to the contemporary world. This is the message that the Buddhist missionary takes to the Western world today. There are many focii around which a Christian-Buddhist dialogue can take place. These are the doctrine of no-Self, of creation without a creator, of salvation without a saviour, of *metta* (goodwill and benevolence) where *nirvana* comes only at the end of a lonely path. For Buddhism suffering must be eliminated, for Christian faith suffering is redemptive as is seen in the Cross of Jesus Christ.

Chapter VI discusses the problems of the "Primitive World". "At least 40 per cent. of the world's population today still lives under primitive conditions" (p. 125). The impact of modern forces has brought disintegration and confusion among the primitives. The Christian Gospel can help meet this crisis. The primitive man, living as he does, in fear has often found in Jesus Christ a redeemer from his fears. "Jesus is the conqueror of the demons" (p. 146).

The next chapter deals with Marxism as a religion. Although many of the prophecies of Marx have not come true, Marxism poses a real challenge for the Christian faith. It is a judgement on the failures of the Christian Church. The Churches had failed in their responsibility for the social and economic amelioration of men and thus Marx has rightly succeeded in giving them a guilty conscience. Preconditions for a dialogue with the communists are three things: first, by an effort of imagination one should "get himself inside the skin of the communist party member; second, the dialogue must reach a point of "a confrontation of faith with faith"; and third, the realization "that the communist also is a person, that he too may have his anxieties, his uncertainties, even his despairs, and that he too as a person certainly stands in the need of the grace of God" (pp. 172–74). The main areas of discussion with the Marxist would be the significance of the individual and the sufficiency of a purely materialistic explanation of things without a reference to an eternal dimension. The

Christian must point to the empty tomb where for the first time the material has been "completely redeemed, and so has become completely serviceable to the spiritual" (p. 177).

Existentialism, another modern religion, is the topic of the next chapter. It is not easy to describe a mood or a mentality but the author has done an excellent job of presenting Existentialism as represented by its various exponents, both Christian and atheistic. The elemental need for freedom is admitted if existence is to be realized in its fullness, and the existentialists are correct in shying away from moral codes that fetter human creativity. Freedom and moral guidance, however, are combined in the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit. "If Existentialists could understand what is meant by the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, they might find that many of their objections to the Christian faith and even to the Christian Church would fall to the ground. If the Church were to take this doctrine seriously, it would recognize itself as being in a state of continuous creation" (p. 202).

"The dialogue between the religions has begun; it is essential that the Christian voice should be heard in it with ever-increasing clarity; and in many parts of the world the Christian voice can only be a Western voice" (p. 217). Repeated criticism is made by men of other faiths as well by Christians, of the association of the Gospel with doctrine, institutions, traditions and cultures of the West but given the historical circumstances that could hardly be avoided. These associations can be and ought to be rethought by Christians so that they would become adequate instruments of conveying the message of Him who remains eternally the judge of all doctrine, all tradition and all cultural institutions.

The book is a profound and clear analysis of contemporary faiths that demand men's commitment today. The author, who was a missionary for many years in India, is able to look at the religions of the East, as it were, from the inside. He has also included chapters on Marxism and Existentialism, the two Gospels that attract many Westerners today. To all these religions he comes with the attitude and eye of a trained and balanced critic. In the course of this long dialogue his sharp and astute mind has not spared any religion, not even his own. In fact, it is the last one which comes in for the greatest amount of penitent heart-searching. Throughout the labyrinth of facts and arguments, one cannot miss the main purpose of the book. It is to help men of all faiths, Christianity included, to meet Jesus Christ as he is and not as he has often been mistakenly represented.

THE PHENOMENON OF MAN*

By Bishop N. C. Sargant

In the introduction to this book (p. 26) Sir Julian Huxley says, concerning the author:

> Through his combination of wide scientific knowledge with deep religious feeling and a rigorous sense of values, he has forced the theologians to view their ideas in the new perspective of evolution, and the scientists to see the spiritual implications of their knowledge....In the light of that new comprehension it is no longer possible to maintain that science and religion must operate in thought-tight compartments or concern separate centres of life; they are both relative to the whole of human existence.
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> The religiously minded can no longer turn their backs upon the natural world, or seek escape from its imperfection in a supernatural world; nor can the materialistically minded deny importance to spiritual experience feeling....What is more he has helped to determine the conditions of advance which will prevent an increase of frustration. The conditions of advance are these: global unity of mankind's noetic organization or system of awareness; love, with good-will and full co-operation; personal integration and internal harmony; and increasing knowledge.
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> Knowledge is basic. It is knowledge which enables us to understand the world and ourselves, and to exercise some control and guidance. It sets us in a fruitful and significant relation with the enduring processes of the universe. And, by revealing the possibilities of fulfilment that are still open, it provides an overriding incentive.

How does the author, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, achieve all this? Firstly by the way which his own life blended the religious and scientific vocation; secondly by the way he welded the work of these two departments of his life into a book which he called *The Phenomenon of Man*. He was born in France in 1881, and died in America in 1955. At eighteen he joined the Jesuit Order and at twenty-four was sent out to teach physics and chemistry at the Jesuit College in Cairo. Here and later in the south of England he acquired real competence in geology and the study of fossils. He was ordained as a priest and ten years

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* By Pierre de Teilhard, Collins, London, 1961, pp. 320, Price 25 *s*.

later in 1922, took his doctorate in Paris. In 1923 he went to China as a member of a series of expeditions to study fossils. The skull of the Peking man was discovered during one of these. His writings and lectures had already been considered as unorthodox by his religious supervisors and he had been forbidden to continue teaching. When he finally returned to France in 1946 he was enjoined not to write any more on religious subjects.

His manuscript of *The Phenomenon of Man* had been prepared as long ago as 1938 but his application to publish it in a recast form was refused in 1950. Owing to the increasing difficulty of his position in France, he moved his headquarters to New York in 1951, where he played an important part in framing anthropological policy, taking part in discussions, and giving lectures. This was where Sir Julian Huxley got to know him. He was prevailed upon to leave his manuscript to a friend to be published after his death. He passed away in 1955 and the extraordinary dialogue between science and religion in his own life enabled him to make the *mega-synthesis* through this book which has satisfied so many people.

The basic plan of the book is laid bare in the four parts—Before Life Came: Life: Thought: Survival. The first three events—Prelife, Life and Thought being in the past and determining for us the future (Survival). The book itself has been described as extraordinarily difficult to read and to understand. Your reviewer shared this experience and pleads his lack of competence to unravel the guiding thread and conduct his readers through the inextricable labyrinth of Père Teilhard's argument. He also hesitates to do so lest the reader, like himself, might grow weary and preplexed and wish to give up before there appears the clearer horizons and material more easy to comprehend, when Book Three is reached.

Man is the most mysterious and disconcerting of all objects met with by science. Science itself has not yet found a place for him in its presentation of the universe. While physics has succeeded in circumspecting the world of the atom, and biology has been able to impose some sort of order on the construction of life, anthropology, supported both by physics and biology, does its best to explain the structure of the human body. But when all these features are put together, the portrait of man falls short of reality. Man, as science is able to reconstruct him today, is an animal—so little separate anatomically from the anthropoid that the modern classification made by zoologists include him in the same super-family which they call the *hominidae*.

'Yet', continues Père Teilhard, 'to judge by the biological results of his advent, is he not in reality something altogether

different?....There lies the whole human paradox; and there, in the same breath, is the evidence that science, in its present-day reconstruction of the world, neglects an essential factor or, rather, an entire dimension of the universe....To give man his natural position in the world of experience, it is necessary and sufficient to consider the *within* as well as the *without* of things (p. 163). Between the last strata of the Pliocene Age, in which man is absent, and the next in which the geologist is dumbfounded to find the first chipped flints, what has happened? And what is the true nature of this leap?

These are the questions which Père Teilhard answers by saying that 'man has crossed the threshold of reflection. Reflection literally means the power to turn in upon oneself. No longer merely to know, but to know oneself. Not only to think but to know that one is thinking. The being who is the object of his own reflection, in consequence of that doubling back upon himself, becomes in a flash able to raise himself into a new sphere. In reality another world is born. Abstraction, logic, reasoned choice and inventions, mathematics, art, calculation of space and time, anxieties and dreams of love—all these activities of the inner life are nothing less than the effervescence of the newly formed centre as it explodes on itself' (p. 165).

It is true that the animal knows. But it cannot know that it knows. If it could, it would long ago have multiplied its inventions. When water is heated to a boiling point under normal pressure, and one goes on heating it, the first thing that happens —without change of temperature—is a tumultuous extension of freed and vaporized molecules. And so with man. According to all appearances propagation, multiplication, ramification went on as before. Nothing, one might think, had altered in the current of life. Here Père Teilhard changes the metaphor and continues: 'Like a river enriched by contact with an alluvial plain, the vital flux, as it crossed the stages of reflection, was charged with new principles, and as a result manifested new activities' (p. 174).

From now onwards it was not merely animated grains which the pressure of evolution pumped up the living system but *grains of thought*. 'But from the moment when the threshold of thought is crossed its progress becomes easier to unravel; for life has not only reached the rung on which we ourselves stand, but begins to overflow freely by its free activity beyond the boundary within which it has been confined by the exigencies of physiology' (p. 177).

Père Teilhard uses his specialized knowledge to tell us about the Pithecanthropos of Java and the Sinanthropos—the Peking Man of China, of whose remains he helped to find numerous specimens and says that these hominoids had not crossed the

threshold of reflection. They were the hominoids of the Lower Quaternary age. But by the Middle Quaternary age there is little doubt that we are studying the vestiges of members of our own race, and when we study the Upper Palacolithic man, it is really ourselves and our own infancy that we are finding, not only the skeleton of modern man, but the framework of modern humanity. In the Upper Quaternary period it is indeed and in the fullest sense present-day man and when we compare him to ourselves, his brain is already perfect. 'So perfect', says Père Teilhard, 'that since that time there seems to have been no measurable variation on increased perfection in the organic instrument of our thought' (p. 202).

We have retained that habit, which has come to us from the days before the knowledge gained from the study of these ancient remains, of isolating the last six thousand years—from that which went on before and calling it history—because we possess written documents. In reality there is no breach of continuity between history and pre-history and we have in fact only just caste off the last moorings which held us to the Neolithic Age (p. 214).

During the period which preceded this our modern age, the arable field was the type of all real property. Now property has evaporated into something fluid, and the wealth of nations has nothing in common with their frontiers. At this very time we are passing through an age of change. After the walls of Space were shaken by the Renaissance and the discoveries of Galileo, it is Evolution which has made mobile the floor (and consequently the ceiling) of Time (p. 217).

In the last century and a half—the most prodigious ever recorded by history since the threshold of reflection was crossed—there has arisen a consciousness to a scale of new dimensions and an entirely renewed universe. What makes and classifies modern man is that he has now become capable of seeing not in terms of Space and Time alone but of Duration. Man is not the centre of the universe, as was once thought, but the arrow pointing the way. Yes, an arrow pointing the way to the final unification of the world in terms of life. Man has discovered, in the words of Julian Huxley, that he is nothing else than *evolution become conscious of itself.*

The whole psychology of modern disquiet is, therefore, linked up with this sudden confrontation with space-time. The malady of this confrontation with space-time manifests itself by a feeling of futility; being crushed by the enormity of Space, the enormity of Duration, the enormity of Number—in other words the malady of multitude and immensity (p. 228).

What are the minimum requirements to be fulfilled before we can say that the road ahead lies open to us? Père Teilhard answers that we must first be assured that there will be the space and chance to fulfil ourselves and, that is to say, to progress till we arrive at the utmost limit of ourselves (p. 231).

'In the last analysis,' says Père Teilhard, 'the best guarantee that a thing would happen is that it appears to be vitally necessary.' The very act by which the fine edge of our mind penetrates the absolute is a phenomenon, as it were, of emergence, and the consciousness of each of us is evolution looking at itself and reflecting.

We must also avoid isolation. Until man came, the most life had managed to realize in the matter of association had been to gather together only on a purely functional impulse. From man onwards, thanks to the universal framework, the branches of one and the same group succeeded in uniting—or rather to become welded together. Père Teilhard sees no coherent and therefore scientific way of grouping this immense succession of facts but as a mega-synthesis, to which all thinking elements find themselves subject.

The idea of one branch draining off for itself all the sap of the tree is equally false. To reach the sun nothing less is required than the combined growth of the entire foliage. He concludes this section. 'The outcome of the world, the gates of the future, the entry into the super-human—these are not thrown open to the few or privileged nor to one chosen people to the exclusion of all others. They will open to an advance of *all together*, in a direction in which all together can join and find completion in a spiritual renovation of the earth....' (p 244): and later on: 'No evolutionary future awaits man except in association with all other men' (p. 246).

It is no longer a single field, however big but the whole world which has to nourish each one of us. The Neolithic man wanted his daily bread in the form of food. But today each man demands his daily ration of iron, copper, electricity, cotton, oil and radium of discoveries, of the cinema and of international news. He goes on to ask: 'Is this not like some great body, which is being born ....to fulfil the ambitions aroused in the reflective being by the newly acquired consciousness that he was one with and responsible to an evolutionary All?' (p. 246).

The dreamers of yesterday glimpsed this and saw that man, in uniting with his fellows, was following a natural precept, whose origins people hardly bothered to analyse although we today are able to perceive the cosmic roots, the physical nature and the specific nature of man. Writing about the present Père Teilhard says, 'Under the combined influence of machinery and the superheating of thought, we are witnessing a *formidable upsurge of*

unused powers. Modern man no longer knows what to do with the time and potentialities he has unleashed. We groan under the burden of his wealth. We are haunted by the fear of "unemployment" (p. 252).

This discouragement is an outcome of the nineteenth century illusion that we are in sight of the promised land. Instead we find ourselves slipping back into a world of spreading and tragic dissension. Lest we be discouraged we must remember that behind us there is the almost endless stretch of pre-history, and realize that 'despite an almost explosive acceleration of the noogenesis at our level we cannot expect to see the earth transform itself under our eyes in the space of a generation....in spite of all evidence to the contrary, mankind may be advancing....as is the way with very big things—doing so almost imperceptibly' (p. 255).

But instead of coming together, mankind repulses itself. Instead of world brotherhood we get the anthill; determinism and mechanism instead of the upsurge of consciousness. Our reaction to this should not be despair, but a determination to examine ourselves, just as does an engineer when the engine goes wrong or runs amok. He does not question the power itself, but works out the calculation afresh to see how it can be brought under better control. In the same way 'the great human machine is designed to work and must work—by producing a super abundance of mind. If it does not work or rather if it produces only matter, this means that it has gone into reverse' (p. 257).

Evolution, therefore, is an ascent towards consciousness, culminating in a sort of supreme consciousness. It is only by a sort of hyper-reflection that thought can garner all the conquests made in the field of what is reflected. Because it contains and engenders consciousness, space-time is necessarily of a convergent nature. Its enormous layers, followed in the right direction, must somewhere ahead become involuted to a point, which Père Teilhard calls the *One a Point*. The bigger the universe the more conscious is the point at which 'the volume of being' that embraces it is concentrated. This is how we associate the ego with the All ! Space and time become truly humanized just because the power of mind is essentially the power of synthesis and organization.

So man must allow his imagination to reveal the power of love developing until it embraces this whole total of men and of the earth. In spite of his apparent capacity to giving his affection to one human being or at the most to a very few, love alone is capable of uniting living beings in such a way as to complete and fulfil them. 'A universal love is not only psychologically possible; it is the only complete and final way in which we are able to love' (p. 267).

We must therefore make up our minds to accept the possibility and the reality of some source of love and an object of love at the summit of the world, above our heads and 'press our science to its farthest limits and recognize and accept not only some vague future existence, but also the radiation of a *present* reality of that mysterious centre of our centres....called Omega' (p. 268).

Père Teilhard emphasizes that the idea that some soul of souls, developing at the top or summit of the world, is not as strange as might be thought of (from the present-day views of human reason) and refers us back to an argument and a footnote in an earlier part of the book (p. 57): if the co-operation of some thousand of millions of cells in our brain can produce our consciousness, the idea becomes vastly more plausible that the co-operation of humanity, or some sections of it, may determine what Compte called 'a Great Being'. Evolution is henceforth occupied with all minds joined together. Beyond all nations and races. the inevitable 'taking as a whole' of mankind has already begun.

One reason for our pessimistic representation of the earth's last days is that we take the accidents which spell death to man and apply them to all mankind. We forget that man is irreplaceable. He must reach his goal, not necessarily but infallibly.

Through all this Père Teilhard sees three principal lines of advance:

(*a*) Research, of which we are seeing only the dawn.

(*b*) The discovery of the human object. Science, by being made to concentrate upon man, will find itself increasingly face to face with religion.

(*c*) The conjunction of science and religion. Our generation and the two which preceded it have heard of nothing but talk of the conflict between science and faith. It seemed a foregone conclusion that the former was to take the place of the latter. But neither can develop normally without the other. Man will only continue to research as long as he is prompted by passionate interest—dependent upon the conviction that the universe has a direction. As science outgrows the stage of analytic investigation and turns towards the summit, we cannot help engaging in religion. 'Hence a belief in a supremely attractive centre which has personality' (p. 284).

Finally, Père Teilhard considers that Christianity contains an extremely simple and astonishingly bold solution to the problem, because in the centre of it is the uncompromising affirmation of a personal God—God is providence directing the universe with loving and watchful care: God is the revealer, communicating himself to man on the level of and through ways of intelligence.

His second reason for thinking like this is because Christianity addresses itself to every man and class of man. Whether we adhere to it or break off from it, we are surely obliged to admit that its stamp and its enduring influence are apparent in every corner of the globe. It is a phenomenon of capital importance for the scientific man that, over an appreciable region of the earth, universal love has not only been conceived and preached but has been shown to be psychologically possible and operative in practice.

His third reason for thinking that Christianity has such a simple and bold solution to the problem is that almost all the ancient religions may never recover from the severe crisis occasioned by 'the modern mind' and cannot adjust themselves to the precise immensities nor to the constructive requirements of space-time. But the Christian, although frightened for the moment by evolution, now perceives that what is being offered to him is a magnificent means of feeling more at one with God.

The bigger the world; the more organic its internal connections, the more will the perspectives of the Incarnation triumph. Christianity is acclimatizing itself and expanding in a world enlarged by science, and fulfils all the conditions we are entitled to expect from a religion of the future. Through it passes the principal axis of evolution.

This is the conclusion of the argument and supplies the answer which Père Teilhard the man of science has sought for—that the Christian phenomenon, which rises upward at the heart of the social phenomenon, precisely confirms the presence, at the summit of the world, of something in line with, but still more elevated than what he has called the *Omega Point*. This is the ray of sunshine, striking through the clouds.....the palpable influence on our world of another and Supreme Someone.

It remains to quote from one more passage (p. 214), where Père Teilhard says that the great unrest which has pervaded our life in the West, ever since the French Revolution, springs from a nobler and deeper cause than the difficulties of a world seeking to recover some ancient equilibrium. He concludes:

'There is no question of shipwreck. What we are up against is the heavy swell of an unknown sea which we are just entering from behind the cape which has protected us. What is troubling us intellectually, politically, and even spiritually is something quite simple....*We have only just cast off the last moorings which held us to the Neolithic Age*' (Henry Brevil).

BOOK REVIEWS

[The following book-notes are prepared to help our readers keep abreast with what is being published and reprinted in the fields of their interest. The editors will appreciate information on any books that might be included in future numbers of the Bulletin.]

Revelation and Reason in Advaita Vedanta. By K. Satchidananda Murty. (Published by Andhra University, Waltair), 1959. Pp. 365. Price Rs. 25.

The book is a detailed study of the problem of revelation and reason in the Advaita Vedanta. The first part of the book is a statement, exposition, and analysis of the role of reason and revelation in the Advaita. The author bases his statements on original Sanskrit texts. The second part of the book deals with the same problem from the point of view of the other five *darsanas* of Indian philosophy. Here the author is evaluatory and critical, bringing his own criticisms of the handling of the problem by the five schools as also by the Vedanta. The strength of the study is in the first part of the book. In the second part, many of the criticisms are not quite free from objection. The book, however, is an excellent summary of the Advaitic view of revelation and reason. In many ways, it is a pioneer work in the field and well deserves a careful reading.

Time and the Timeless. By T. M. P. Mahadevan. (Upanishad Vihar, Madras, Agents: Chetana Ltd., Bombay). Price Rs. 2.

The book is a gist of two lectures delivered under the Principal Miller Lectureship Foundation of Madras University. The conditions of the Lectureship define the theme as: "The Inner Meaning of Human History as Disclosing the One increasing Purpose that runs through the Ages." Dr. Mahadevan evinces the fear that the theme might be run threadbare by repeated lectureships year after year. The author hopes that his selection of the theme "Time and the Timeless" will bring a fresh way of looking at one of the problems included in the general boundaries of the prescribed limits of the Lectureship. What is the place of "time and the timeless" in the purpose of human existence? Or more relevantly, how is man's soul related to these twin aspects of our being and becoming? The author states, "The realization of the non-dual eternal Brahman-Atman is the goal set for man. The approach to this goal is through time, the goal itself is beyond time." Following closely the Advaita view of phenomenal existence, he argues that time gets its true medium when viewed from the perspective of the Timeless. As to time "its purpose is to serve as the gateway to Reality.... In other words, our inquiry into the nature of time must lead us to an understanding of the nature of Reality". The aim of all temporal existence is to ultimately realize the timeless Brahman—that is the one purpose that runs through the ages.

In the course of the lectures the Western views of time are subjected to criticism and the reality of time is argued for in the sense that the Advaita Vedanta understands it. Today, when much philosophical discussion centres on the topic of time, this book is indeed most timely.

What Vedanta Means to Me. John Yale Ed. (Published by the Vedanta Society of Southern California. Doubleday & Co., Inc., New York). Price $3.95.

A symposium of essays on the Vedanta by sixteen of its Western admirers including such names as Aldous Huxley, Gerald Heard and Christopher Isherwood, it gives an idea as to how the gospel of Sri Ramakrishna with its emphasis on the Advaita is finding favour in some circles in the West. The writers deal with the various aspects of the philosophy of the Upanishad as understood and grasped by Western thinkers. Gerald Heard declares that the Vedanta is "cosmologically satisfactory" while it appeals to Aldous Huxley as providing the "minimum working hypotheses". The integrating quality of the Vedanta attracts Isherwood for whom Vedanta is both *guru* and *mantram* teaching as it does the nature of Ultimate Reality and shows the way to attain it. To Marianna Masin the Vedanta brings peace amidst the confusions and complexities of life. Swami Atulananda (Cornelius Heblom of Holland) says, "the study of Vedanta may take us away from the narrow teachings of the church but will make us worshippers of the true Christ who dwells in every heart". The demand of the Vedanta on Jane Molard did not mean giving up of her way of living but added charm and beauty to it. John Yale was saved from frustration by the Vedanta while the Vedic prayers thrilled the Countess of Sandwich.

Advaita and Visishtadvaita. By S. M. Srinivasa Chari. (Published by Asia Publishing House, Contractor Buildings, Nicol Road, Ballard Estate, Bombay-1), 1961, Pp. 204. Price Rs. 12.

An astute exposition of Vedanta Desika's *Shatadushani*, a classical work, which examines critically the entire doctrine of Advaita monism from the standpoint of Ramanuja's Visishtadvaita (qualified non-dualism). After the death of Ramanuja, the great exponent of qualified non-dualism, many Advaitins reconstructed the system of Sankara in the light of Ramanuja's criticism and thus created a new philosophical situation necessitating a further cirticism of the Advaita system. Desika's *Shatadushani* was produced to meet this situation and contains sixty-six arguments mainly against Advaita. Dr. Chari's analysis of the book organizes its arguments into eight headings: *Pramanas*, Perception, Consciousness, Individual Self, Brahman, Universe, *Avidya* and *Sadhana* and *Mukti*. The book serves as a good guide to the classical differences that divide the two great schools of the Vedanta: the *Visishtadvaita* and the *Kevala advaita*. At the end there is a glossary, a bibliography, an index, and a list of the arguments dealt with in the *Shatadushani*.

Sri Madhva's Teachings in His Own Words. By B. N. K. Sharma, Bhavan's Book University Series No. 79. (Published by the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay-7). Price Rs. 2.

A summary of the philosophy, religion, ethics, life and teachings of Sri Madhva in his own words. 155 passages have been selected from the 37 extant works of Madhva and brief comments written with a view to explain what exactly Madhva purposed to convey. The philosophy of Madhva has been explained in seven chapters: Conception of Reality, *Pramana Vichara, i.e.*, logic and theory of knowledge, Conception of the Word, *Jivas* (souls), Brahman (God), *Sadhana Vichara* (the way of liberation), *Moksha Svarupa* (the nature of release). The book also contains an appendix enumerating, with brief outlines, the works of Madhva and another appendix on the mystical movement among the Madhvas known as the Hari Dasa School.

A History of Dvaita School of Vedanta and Its Literature, Vol. I. By B. N. K. Sharma. (Booksellers' Publishing Co., Bombay). Pp. 372. Price Rs. 17·50.

A history and exposition and defence of the dualistic philosophy of Madhva. The author traces the history of Indian dualism from the time of Vedas down to the presdnt day. Then in the second part, an account of the life and work of Madhva is sketched in detail, showing the great organizational ability of the Acharya. Lastly, in the third section, the author traces and expounds the development of Dvaita in the hands of Jayatirth. He is keenly aware of the usual criticisms of the Dvaita school and attempts to meet these objections especially as they have been raised by Prof. Ghate in his handling of Madhva's Bhashya.

The Concept of Mind in Indian Philosophy. By Sarasvati Chennakesavan. (Published by Asia Publishing House, Contractor Building, Nicol Road, Ballard Estate, Bombay-1), 1960. Pp. 164. Price Rs. 10.

Dissatisfied with the Western style of dealing with the problem of the relation of mind and matter, the author finds the key to the solution in regarding "mind as a higher form of matter capable of reflecting the nature of self which is consciousness" (p. x.). The first four chapters deal with the view of mind as found in the orthodox schools of Indian philosophy and the last chapter is a comparative study of the Indian and Western views. In the first chapter the author concludes by emphasizing the distinction between mind and the self: "Mind cannot be identified with the self." In the next two chapters, dealing with the role of mind in knowledge, the author brings out the distinctive characteristics of the Indian approach by showing that in an act of cognition, it is the mind that goes out to meet the object unlike the usual Western view wherein the mind is the recipient of the reflected energy from the object on the mind. In the fourth chapter, the most significant point the author makes is to show that epistemology in the Indian *darsanas* has a purpose beyond mere acquisition of knowledge: it is self-realization or liberation. To attain this, it is contended, one must go beyond mental states. The concluding chapter is a comparison of the Indian and Western understanding of mind, in which

the latter is subjected to a severe criticism. "The trouble generally with Western thinkers is that not only do they view mind and matter as disjunctively capable of mutual exclusion, but they imagine that these alternatives alone exhaust the field. Until this attitude is modified and the recognition of a self over and above mind and matter is made, there can be no satisfactory solution for the mind-body problem" (p. 153).

The Life of Sri Aurobindo. By A. B. Purani. (Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry). Price Rs. 10.

A biography of Sri Aurobindo by one of his intimate disciples. The book covers the period 1872–1926, the latter date marking the beginning of seclusion from the public. These years are divided into three significant periods in the life of the great saint-philosopher: the first narrates events upto his departure for Pondicherry, the second takes the story to 1926 to the day of *siddhi*. For lack of biographical material for the years of seclusion, the third section gives excerpts from *Sri Aurobindo on Himself*.

Education and the Aim of Human Life. By Pavitra (P. B. Saint-Hilaire). (Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, Pondicherry.) Price Rs. 1·50.

An adventurous experiment in education is being carried on in the Pondicherry International Centre founded by Sri Aurobindo and now under the supervision of the "Mother". The book attempts to summarise the philosophical ideal of a complete education envisaged by Sri Aurobindo in his concept of "integral education". Education should prepare children for the new humanity that is to come in the future, wherein man is to be transmuted into superman. Children in the Centre come from different races and cultures bringing in the contributions of their various cultures. Attempt is made, by introducing students to the treasurers of different cultures, to instil into them the fact of the unity of the human race which is first to be experienced in the human psyche.

The Teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi in His Own Words. Edited by Arthur Obsorne. (Published by Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai). Pp. 256. Price Rs. 4.

Collected and arranged here by one of the disciples are the discourses and dialogues of the Maharshi. As the Maharshi wrote very little himself, these collections by one who is a devotee are all the more valuable. There are seven chapters to the book, of which the first two deal with the theory and practice of Maharshi's spiritualism; the third tells about the necessity of renunciation; the fourth deals with the questions concerning the "Guru". The fifth and the sixth chapters are concerned with the significance and methods of Self-enquiry, while the last chapter explains the final goal of Self-Realization. A good collection for getting an idea of the teachings of the Maharshi.

Reflections on the Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi. By S. S. Cohen. (Published by Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, Madras State), 1959. Pp. 180. Price Rs. 4.

The fourteen chapters of the book contain 672 brief extracts from the words of Sri Ramana Maharshi. Each passage is followed by an expository commentary to bring out its meaning. The book is an authentic exposition of the Vedantic philosophy of the Maharshi, and the way to achieve self-realization through the twin methods of *jnana* and *vairagya* (knowledge and renunciation).

A Seminar on Saints. Edited by T. M. P. Mahadevan. [Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras-17, 1960). Pp. 456. Price Rs. 12·50.

A symposium of papers read at the Seminar on saints held at Madras, 1956, under the auspices of the Union for the Study of the Great Religions (India). The papers deal with the life and teachings of saints selected from the history of the different religious traditions. It is understandable that no matter how large a book might be, it can neither include nor do justice to all the saints. In the Seminar, the selection of the saints was made by the speakers themselves. Whereas a high standard is maintained throughout the book, the papers on St. Benedict, St. Francis of Assisi and St. Ignatius Loyola deserve special mention. The lives of Sadasiva Brahmendra, Andal, Karaikkal Ammaiyar, Gandhiji have been well written. Words from the opening address by Vice-President, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, help to summarise the spirit of the Seminar: "Religious education depends far less on the spoken word than on the living examples set by the saints themselves, who live in God, clothed in love and immersed in service." In the same vein, the three introductory papers by different authors give an idea of the underlying philosophy of the USGR.

Bhoodan-Yajna (*Land-Gifts Mission*). By Vinoba Bhave. (Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad) Pp. 134. Price Rs. 0.85.

Of the twin aims of Mahatma Gandhi, the political freedom and a socio-economic revolution of the country, the latter is still in the process of realization. Acharya Vinoba Bhave has approached this task in a unique way following closely in the spiritual tradition of the Mahatma. This booklet has a ring of authenticity about it, coming as it does from the pen of the author of the Bhoodan movement. First published in 1953 it has already undergone three reprintings. It is a collection of essays, originally published as articles in the *Harijan*, dealing with different aspects of the *Bhoodan-yajna*, its origin, purpose, its techniques of working, its criticisms and their answers. Vinobaji contends that land belongs to God just as do air and water. All should have enough land for their needs. Hence he begs from those who have for those who do not have. The long-range aim of collecting fifty million acres of land is still far from view but Vinobaji is a man of faith who believes in "thought-force" which "has no limitations". He aims at a three-fold change: "First, I want a change in people's hearts; secondly, I want to create a change in their lives; and thirdly, I want

to change the social structure" (p. 24). This book is a good introduction to the thought and practice of the Bhoodan movement.

Sister Nivedita of Ramakrishna Vivekananda. By Pravrajika Atmaprana. (Published by Sister Nivedita Girls' School, 5 Nivedita Lane, Calcutta-3), 1961, Pp. 297 + xvi. Price Rs. 7·50.

An illuminating biography of Miss Margaret Elizabeth Noble, better known to India as Sister Nivedita. An English woman, a seeker after the mystic truth of India, she was captivated by the personality of Swami Vivekananda and adopted him as her *guru.* With a view to serving the women of India, she identified herself with them in religion, dress and manner of living. After passing through the rigours of her training under the guidance of the *guru* she was initiated into the Ramakrishna order of *Brahmacharini* and later took the vows of *sannyasa* taking the new name of Sister Nivedita. This book is a vivid record of her devotion and service to India until the day of her death and cremation in Darjeeling.

The Spirit's Pilgrimage. By Mira Behn (Madeleine Slade). (Published by Orient Longmans Private Ltd., 17, Chittaranjan Avenue, Calcutta-13), 1960. Pp. 318. Price Rs. 15.

An autobiography of Madeleine Slade, better known in India by her adopted name Mira Behn. Dauther of Admiral Slade, brought up in the ease and splendour of the Victorian bureaucratic society, she yet yearned for something higher and spiritual. In this book she describes stage by stage the pilgrimage of her spirit. Having been impressed by the work and personality of Mahatma Gandhi, she joined the Sabarmati Ashram in 1925 and remained there until the death of "Bapu" as she calls him. Left without a guide at the death of Gandhiji, her old yearnings to find deeper spiritual satisfactions in life reappeared and she undertook several experiments. First a cattle farm (Pashulok) near Rishikesh to "develop an area or areas where men and animals combine with Nature in the formation of a decentralized society demonstrative of Bapu's ideals for World Peace". Next she tried her experiments at Bhilangana in Tehri district of the Himalayas, and then in Kashmir (Gaobal). The end of the book leaves her in the forests of Baden, near Vienna, still pursuing the captivating but elusive ideal of her spiritual pilgrimage. The book also sheds much valuable light on Gandhiji's life as viewed by the eyes of a close and devoted disciple.

The Soul of Modern India. By John Correia-Afonso. (Heras Institute of Indian History and Culture, Bombay. The Messenger Office, St. Xavier's College, Bombay-1.) Price Rs. 2·75.

The book presents a critical analysis of the contemporary social scene in India. Sudden and rapid industrial and social changes have shaken the foundations of our culture. With the breaking up of the traditional patterns of village family relationships, the weakening of the caste structure, the introduction of new and foreign ideas and

practices, have come confusion about time-honoured sanctions threatening our self-identity. There is a visible trend towards materialism, a division between the everyday life of business and the life of the spirit. The remedy suggested is the cultivation of a new synthesis of East and West, which will preserve with wise discretion that which is of value in both the traditions. In this the West can "help actively to save India—and itself—from the monster of modern materialism which is of Western origin". The final answer to our cultural crisis, the author points out, is found in heeding to the supernatural revelation where God became man.

The Cult of Vithoba. By G. A. Deleury, S.J., Ph.D. (Deccan College, Post-graduate and Research Institute, Poona), 1960, pp. 224.

This was originally submitted as a doctoral thesis and now published under the joint sponsorship of the University of Poona and the Deccan College. It is an original study of the cult of Vithoba, the deity of Pandharpūr, dealing with the etymology of the name, iconography of the image and extant inscriptions. Tradition holds that, Viththala is an avatāra of Viṣhnu, being none other than Kṛṣṇa himself who went to Pandharpūr to watch the devotion of a certain ascetic, Pundalīk, for his aged parents. Popular etymology links the name Viththala with *vit*, a brick, since the image stands on a brick. But, our author shows that Viththala has no philological connection either with Viṣnu or with vit, and that the evidence of local inscriptions would lead to the conclusion that the term is of Kannada origin. Closer scrutiny of the Pandharpūr image, as well as of other ancient images of Viththala, Fr. Deleury claims, would reveal that the main features of Viththala, in particular the erect posture and arms akimbo, are unlike those of Viṣnu or Kṛṣṇa. The only images with arms akimbo are those of Bir Kaur, a cattle god of West Bihar and of the figure carved on hero-stones in Mahāraāshtra and Karnātaka. Hero-stones are mostly erected in the memory of courageous cowherds who met their death trying to protect or recover the village cattle from marauding thieves. The statue of Viththala would then probably be a later development of such a hero-stone.

The study is of value also because of the vivid description it gives of the Vārkarī path, the sect of Vithoba bhaktas, which is very popular all over Mahārāshtra. This is evidenced by the elaborate ritual performed in the Pandharpūr temple, and the annual pilgrimage of the Vārkarīs to the sacred shrine in which the author was privileged to participate. The book also contains valuable translations into English of poems of the Maratha saints and is therefore an useful addition to studies of Marathi bhakti cults.

Sufism : Its Saints and Shrines. By John A. Subhan, Lucknow (The Lucknow Publishing House), 1960, Pp. 423.

The author of this book, himself a convert from Islam to Christian faith, is especially competent to deal with the subject of Sufism; this for at least two reasons: His own rich experience among the Sufis

before his conversion and later his own studies of Islam as a lecturer and principal of the Henry Martyne School of Islamics.

The book may conveniently be divided into several themes. The early chapters go into the problems of the origin of Sufism in Islam. Of the various surmises with regard to the original connotation of the word *suf*, the author seems to prefer the view that would relate the word etymologicaliy to "wool", "inasmuch as we know that in the early days of Islam, woollen garments were frequently worn by ascetics, not only as their distinctive garb, but also as a symbol of their voluntary poverty, and renunciation of the world and all its pleasures" (p. 7). The early history of Sufism is traced with accurate detail, and we are introduced to the classical figures of the great Muslim mystics of all ages. The lives and contributions of such men as Attar, Jalalu'd-Din Rumi, Sa'di, Hafiz and Jami are delineated with lively anecdotes and often illustrated by excerpts from their writings.

Chapter III is a clear account of philosophical presuppositions of the Sufi gnostic system. The next two chapters describe the Sufi "path". The Sufi conceives of his life as a journey passing through many stages until he reaches the final stage of *wasl* or union. The "states" of the mystic life are also described one by one leading to the final state of *fana* and *baqa* wherein the Sufi truly finds himself by losing himself in God. The delicate relation of the *pir* (teacher) and *murshid* (pupil) along with the devotional exercises of the Sufi are graphically described. The IV Chapter is an interesting account of the veneration of the Sufi saints and the practices connected with shrines and monuments which represent an aspect of popular Islam.

The introduction of Sufism into India forms the subject-matter of Chapter VII. Sufism entered India through three gateways: the earliest incursions were through the Arab sea coast travellers to the Malabar Coast, later followed by others through Sindh, until finally the flood of Sufi influence poured into the country through the Northern passes.

The difficult subject of the relation of Sufism to Indian thought is dealt with in Chapter VIII. The author admits that it is a question on which there is a "considerable diversity of opinion", and so he takes upon himself only the modest task of showing first "that it was reasonable for Hinduism to exert such influence and then content ourselves by giving certain parallel doctrines in Sufism and Hinduism" (p. 133). This the author has done but that does not prove mutuality of influence. It is rightly contended by many scholars that Islam has within its own Scriptures and traditions the sources of Sufism and thus one does not have to look abroad to find these sources. Neither regional contiguity nor similarity of practice are sufficient proofs for borrowing. It is interesting, however, to know how similar mystic practices are found within the context of different religious traditions.

An important aspect of Sufism is its fraternities (*khanwada*) or Religious Orders. Most fraternities trace their chains of succession to the founder of Islam, Muhammad, himself. Next in succession are

Ali, "the gate of knowledge", and Hasan of Basra. Then follows a detailed account of the four main Sufi orders together with their peculiar emphases and their saints. Many of these orders were further subdivided and an account of these various subdivisions is given. The four main orders treated at length are: first, the Chishti Order founded in India by Khwaja Mu'inu-Din Chishti whose *urs* is held every year in Ajmere. Second, the Suhrawardi Order, was popularised in India by Baha'u-d'Din Zakariya. Third, the Qadiri Order, was established in India by Sayyid Muhammad Ghawth, tenth in the line of succession, three hundred years after its founder's death, Saykh 'Abdu'l Qadir Jilani. Fourth, the Naqshbandi Order, was introduced in India by Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah Berang, seventh in the line of succession from Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband, the original founder.

In many ways unorthodox to the original impulses, Sufism has yet carved out an integral place for itself in Islam. The strength of Sufism is in its spirit of hospitality to all and sundry doctrine to accommodate many a varied temperament, its emphasis on the feeling and loving aspects of human nature. The various fraternities do have their set forms of devotions but there is at the same time sufficient freedom to invite and to attract men with their diversities of spiritual hunger and yearning.

For one who would like to get an idea of the origin, development, belief and practice of Sufism, especially as they developed with reference to India, this book will prove a mine of information. It is replete with interesting anecdotes and incidents from the lives of the saints of Islam. The book is clear, comprehensive and well-written. The revised edition of the book is indeed welcome.

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